DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 043 254 FL 001 890

AUTHOR	Naylor, J. W., Comp.
TITLE	French Readers for Primary Schools: An Annotated Bibliography.
INSTITUTION	Nuffield Foundation, Leeds (England).
PUB DATE	Oct 66
NOTE	84p.; Reports and Occasional Papers No. 12
AVAILABLE FROM	Nuffield Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project, The University of York, Micklegate House, Micklegate, York, England ($1.13)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.50 HC-$4.30
DESCRIPTORS	*Annotated Bibliographies, Booklists, Book Reviews, *Childrens Books, Elementary Education, Fles, *Fles Materials, Foreign Language Books, *French, Language Instruction, Library Material Selection, Literature Reviews, Modern Languages, *Reading Materials, Reading Material Selection

ABSTRACT

Teachers of elementary school children will find this annotated bibliography of 39 readers considers 10 relevant factors for each entry. They cover: (1) components and bibliographical details (including pagination, cost, publisher, and book size), (2) general description, (3) content, (4) notes for the teacher, (5) presentation, (6) illustrations, (7) activities, (8) audio aids, (9) exercises, and (10) general comments. The books, selected for their readability, are generally texts written in the present, future, or perfect tense. Several items are suitable for first year students in secondary school. (RL)

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NUFFIELD FOREIGN LANGUAGES TEACHING MATERIALS PROJECT

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FRENCH READERS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY

J. W. NAYLOR

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FL 001 890

Reports and Occasional Papers No. 12

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October 1966

PREFACE

The purpose of this bibliography is to assist teachers of Primary School children to choose suitable supplementary reading material in French. This choice is normally made for juniors who have spent at least one year acquiring basic patterns of spoken French and who have also been introduced to reading in their main course.

The term "reader" is used in the sense it has for French teaching in this country, i.e. a reading-book that is supplementary to a main course in French as a foreign language. Though here and there a publication described in this bibliography has features that do not conform to this definition, evaluation has always been carried out in the light of it. Whatever the intention of a given writer may have been, and whatever passing fashion may have appeared in the history of French teaching in Britain, it is not considered methodologically sound for a book printed in the form of a supplementary reader to assume in addition the functions of a main course. A main course is divided into lessons that present independent (or at least self-contained) texts covering a variety of everyday themes. A supplementary reader, on the other hand, takes the form of a continuous story in chapters or a series of short stories or plays. It is employed as an occasional change from the main course. The intention is to provide rapid reading for pleasure and at the same time further practice in language that is largely, if not completely, familiar. As the supplementary reader is written within a given range of language as a whole, its author is under no obligation to display simpler grammatical or syntactical forms near the beginning. And the whole purpose of the reader is thwarted if any attempt is made to incorporate grammatical exercises or summaries, as children then view it as a textbook in disguise.

The situation is most satisfactory for the teacher when a set of supplementary readers at different levels of language is printed to go with a particular course. Instances of this are to be found in this bibliography. When this is the case, the teacher can usually feel confident that the grammar and vocabulary will not be in excess of what children can reasonably assimilate and use. Not every course-maker, however, has been able to publish readers to accompany his work. In these circumstances writers of quite independent readers have stepped in and filled the vacuum. The teacher wishing to choose a particular independent reader (or any reader that goes with a course other than the one the children have) needs to check the linguistic content very carefully. Unless this is comparable with that in the main course used, the introduction of the reader may double the amount of grammar and vocabulary encountered by the class. No matter how the new items were presented, the net effect would be to give the children linguistic indigestion instead of pleasure. Some persons might be inclined to dismiss this consideration on the grounds that only part of the language experienced need be retained for active use. They would see too close a parallel with processes at work in the acquisition of a mother tongue, in which some units of language are taken over for active use while others can be allowed to remain, at least for the time being, only vaguely understood. Unfortunately nature's haphazard way is not sufficiently economical to apply to the early stages of foreign language learning. Here, as time is so much shorter and corrective influences are far fewer, first impressions tend to remain. It therefore behoves the teacher to see that those first impressions are as accurate as possible. This means that all aspects of the teaching (i.e. comprehension, pronunciation and use) need to be attended to on the occasion that new items of vocabulary or grammar are introduced. If these principles are to be observed and the necessary rapidity of pace maintained, the teacher has to choose a reader with a level of language that conforms broadly to that in his main course.

The question of selecting a suitable reader has brought us face to face with the task of the teacher. Those influenced by methods of teaching reading in the mother tongue incline naturally towards the view that textual comprehension is the only goal. They would be satisfied on seeing that the children were able to follow the meaning. Rapid reading for pleasure, they would claim, is inconsistent with the active use of the language itself. Experienced teachers of foreign languages, however, would not find these two things incompatible. They would consider that the teacher's task is not limited to helping the pupils to master comprehension, but involves also some means of re-employing the French in oral communication. Without this practice, which need only be confined to the thread of the story, there can be no solid progress in the language. When it is properly attended to, children in time become conscious of a growing mastery over the new tool of communication. In practice this contributes just as much to the atmosphere of enjoyment as the theme of the story itself. Provided that a wise choice of reader has been made, there need be no difficulty in maintaining a brisk pace.

The original list of readers was restricted to those written for Primary Schools, or in a few cases described by their publishers as being usable at both primary and secondary levels. The number deriving from these sources being comparatively small, it was decided to include some readers designed for the first year of Secondary Schools. The proviso was that the basic tense range did not exceed the present, future and perfect tenses. Books in this category have come to occupy a fairly prominent place in this bibliography. They are examined purely for the degree of relevancy that they might have for the Primary School purpose. At times it has proved necessary to state that the language range is inappropriate for juniors. The intention here is not to reflect criticism, but to remind the reader of this bibliography of a difference of emphasis that exists in French teaching at the two levels. The extended terms of reference also brought into consideration a few simple readers published by a French firm with a London branch. They are included because on the whole they observe principles of language selection which we consider important for the preparation of French readers to be used at this level in British schools.

We have not included French books for French children even when they do contain a suitable story. This is because of the difficulty that English children would have with the actual language of the text. A typical example of this literature is to be found in "Le Manège Enchanté". Although having all the attractions of a children's book, this work displays side by side with the simplest conversational remarks the following constructions:

"Pourvu qu'ils ne me fassent pas trop courir."
"On se croirait sur le pont d'un navire."
"Comme c'est gentil, les enfants, d'avoir pensé à ce vieux père Pivoine."
"Mais il va falloir que je regagne mon manège."
"Depuis que Zébulon est avec moi, mes chevaux ne manquent pas de cavaliers."

It is evident that this language is too uncontrolled to serve a foreign language teaching purpose at the primary stage. Where there is support for the use of books of this type in British Primary Schools, it can only be supposed that the teacher ignores both the difficulties of the French text and the whole question of re-employing the language. It is clear, therefore, that a purchase made largely because of the general appearance of the books could not be justified on language teaching grounds.

Under the heading of "General Comments" remarks are made in the light of French teaching practice in the Primary Schools at the time of writing. Large-scale experimentation is in progress with the teaching of French begun orally at 8 plus. A few of the readers evaluated in this bibliography were first published before this experimentation began. It has occasionally been necessary for us to point out that the teaching methods that their construction presupposes are not in line with what is now generally approved. Such books represent only a small minority and it is confidently hoped that the Primary School teacher will have little difficulty in finding material that suits his purpose. Prices quoted are in all cases the latest of which we have been informed.

Thanks are due to Mr. M. Tatem of the Department of Phonetics of Leeds University for assistance when the bibliography was supplemented. At this stage Mr. Tatem contributed drafts of some of the objective descriptions found under Headings 1-9. The information that appears under Heading 1 (Components and Bibliographical Details) and 5 (Presentation) relates in most cases to the actual copy received. In a few instances details of a new impression or price have been received recently from publishers and incorporated in the descriptions.

J. Naylor (Nuffield Fellow)
July 1966.

ALLAN, R. N.

Soucoupes Volantes

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 64) containing text, exercises and end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	0
Total cost	2	0

Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London. 1959, 3rd reprint 1964.
Soft cover: $5\frac{1}{4}$" x $7\frac{1}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Soucoupes Volantes" is intended for use during the first two years of secondary school French instruction. The material of the story itself and the French are original. The cultural setting is modern and the story takes place at the seaside. There is nothing uniquely French except a reference to the length of the school summer vacation (3 months: although nowadays this has been reduced). However, many of the questions which follow each chapter are directed towards knowledge about specific French scientific achievements. The illustrations are in keeping with the setting.

3. CONTENT. This is a continuous story, divided into fourteen short chapters, concerning two children: Anne, who is thirteen years old and Michel, her brother, who is twelve. Both children are fond of reading - Michel particularly of science fiction. It is the summer holidays, and the children take their dog, Fobo, down to the beach for the afternoon. Suddenly they notice a round object in the sky which noiselessly floats down to land at the water's edge. The children are hiding in a cave, watching the mysterious object which, according to Michel, is a flying saucer. The tide is coming in and they decide that they must leave the cave. Fobo rushes out and attacks the saucer and then runs away. The children hear a hissing sound, and slowly the saucer becomes smaller and smaller until Michel is able to read the lettering on the top describing the object as a meteorological balloon.

There are about 750 words listed in the end-vocabulary of this reader. Although the author has not clarified his method of introducing new words, no one chapter appears over-loaded. Most of the words are common, but inevitably the plot necessitates the use of a few technical or semi-technical terms (e.g. fusée, interplanétaire, métérologique). These, however, arise only where necessary to maintain the reader's interest in the story. The end-vocabulary lists verb forms as well as infinitives and also some of the more common expressions: e.g. under 'moment' we find 'à ce moment-là'.

The grammatical range has been restricted to enable the reader to be used in the first year. The narrative tense throughout is the present and the use of object pronouns has been avoided. Reflexive and many irregular verbs have been freely included. Sentence structure has for the most part remained very simple and straightforward and where subordinate clauses do occur these are mainly of the relative type. (There are only a very few occurrences of the oblique case of the relative pronoun.)

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. This reader is set in large clear type on midweight paper. Exercises and the end-vocabulary are set in somewhat smaller type. The layout is normal for narrative form with conversation, although the proportion of the latter is relatively small. The punctuation, even for conversation, is in the English style. Each chapter begins on a new page and averages one to two pages in length. French is used throughout the text and exercises.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Most of the illustrations in "Soucoupes Volantes" occupy one third of a page. They are clear black-and-white line drawings, usually two per chapter. They illustrate the characters in action in the important incidents from the story. In the introductory chapters a few smaller pictures are used to introduce the characters to the reader.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Exercises follow each chapter. These always begin with ten comprehension questions based on the text of the chapter itself. A further exercise is grammatical, often requiring the pupil to fill blanks with appropriate words, or to put sentences together. Finally there is a question which the pupils are to ask their teacher about a famous Frenchman or French discovery. These take the typical form: "Posez gentiment à votre professeur cette question: Voulez-vous nous parler de Mme. Curie, Monsieur, s'il vous plaît?"

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Soucoupes Volantes" provides young secondary school pupils with stimulating reading material. The theme is as modern as one can expect in an elementary reader. The atmosphere of suspense created by a situation in which the two main characters are cut off by a rising tide and confronted by a weird object is a great asset. It is a pity that the need for illustrations makes it impossible to conceal the outcome from children who are half-way through the story. The book is written in a natural, sympathetic and imaginative style. The actions and reactions of Fobo, the children's dog, are prominent. When the prospects of survival seem bleak for all concerned we learn that Fobo "pense à l'os enterré dans le jardin à la maison".

An unusual feature is the inclusion of a question at the end of each chapter for children to put to the teacher. Many of these questions ask for information about celebrated French names. As this information is not given in the reader itself and cannot at this stage be imparted wholly through French, the teacher is put in the position of either having to use English in the French lesson, or having to find time outside the French lesson in which to give the answers.

As far as juniors are concerned the intake of grammar and vocabulary is a little too great to be assimilated by children at this stage. Even reading aloud would probably prove too hard a task. This is unfortunate because the story itself is straightforward and the meaning is easy to illustrate.

de BEAUMONT, P.

Aladin et la Lampe Merveilleuse

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupil's reader (pp. 80), containing text, grammatical section, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Paper cover	3	3	Limp linson	4	0
Total cost	3	3	Total cost	4	0

Hachette, London and 79, Bd. Saint-Germain, Paris. 1962.
Soft cover: 4½" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This reader is one of a series entitled "Illustrated Basic French Readers" which are distributed exclusively in the United Kingdom by the above-mentioned publishers. It is intended for Secondary School pupils in their first year of studying French. The text is an adaptation in "Le Français Fondamental" of the story "Aladin" from the "Thousand and One Nights" and is based on the translations from the Arabic by Galland and Burton. The cultural setting is ancient China according to the text, though judging from the illustrations it would be more accurate to call it North African.

3. CONTENT. An adaptation of one of the Arabian Nights stories, this reader tells how "Aladin, the son of a poor tailor, plays with the other children in his home town. When his father dies, his mother has to work very hard to make ends meet. One day Aladin meets an African dervish, and a new, exciting life begins for him." Thanks to a magic lamp Aladin passes safely through several dangerous adventures, marrying the daughter of the king of China, and himself eventually becomes king.

The vocabulary in this reader has been carefully restricted to the 700-750 initial words of "Le Français Fondamental, 1° degré". Added to the original list are some 100 words derived from these and a further 15 which do not appear in the "Français Fondamental" count. However, the situations have not themselves been restricted at the expense of the story. Any archaic or oriental idioms have been carefully omitted, but every attention has been paid to preserving the atmosphere of the original tale.

In the same way as the vocabulary, the grammar range has been systematically restricted to conform with level one of the recommendations of "Le Français Fondamental". The author has graded the introduction of grammar and new sentence structures. Thus the first two-thirds include no subordinate clauses, conjunctions or relative pronouns; the verb tenses employed are initially restricted to the present, perfect and future, though there are a few instances of the conditional and imperfect.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Aladin" is set in clear medium-sized type on rather thin paper. The entire book (except for a cover note) is printed in French and punctuation is in French style. Inverted commas are used to introduce conversation and a change of speaker is indicated by a dash. The story is mainly in narrative form, but there is a fair proportion of conversation. The text is divided into 23 chapters averaging about three pages in length. Footnotes are used to explain the 100 derived words and the 15 words outside the restricted vocabulary range.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are 15 illustrations scattered through the text; these are black and white and usually about 1/3 page in size. They illustrate the characters in scenes from the text itself.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. There are no exercises in "Aladin". Under the heading "Qui cherche trouve", there are three pages of grammatical notes at the end of the text. These are arranged alphabetically according to principal word in an expression, or simply under words presenting any difficulty of inflexion, etc. Thus we find a table of negative forms (ne ... rien, etc.), irregular verbs (as: ferai, irai, lu, mis, etc.), and idioms such as "venir de ...".

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Aladin et la Lampe Merveilleuse" is a good example of the "Textes en français facile". The story, told in 23 compact chapters is full of action and interest for young children. There is much in the exotic atmosphere to appeal to the young imagination, and even the unreal element is likely to captivate those who might well disdain fairy stories. No comment is needed on the authenticity of the French, though vocabulary restriction can lead to some strange effects, e.g. "Il parle une langue inconnue" (from an early chapter).

    Experience alone can decide whether "Aladin et la Lampe Merveilleuse", which is classed as a first-year reader for the secondary stage, can serve a purpose in the Junior School. There are no structural difficulties in the greater part of the book, and one even has the impression that the author should have used simple co-ordinating conjunctions to avoid the abruptness of endless short sentences. The apparent vocabulary range, however, presents a considerable challenge. Whereas older children could be expected to read these stories as a whole and re-employ the language used, juniors would need a more limited target.

    The grammatical notes provided in "Qui cherche trouve" make use of definitions which employ terms outside the basic vocabulary of juniors. The illustrations, however, contain plenty of situational detail.

BUNN, E. G.; ELSON, C.C.

Fluent French Song Sketches

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

	s.	d.
Pupils' reader (pp. 72), containing texts:	3	0
Total cost	3	0

University of London Press, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.
1956. Soft cover: 5" x $7\frac{1}{4}$".

Five 10" discs (FREN 271) are available from the Linguaphone Institute, 209 Regent Street, London, W.1.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Fluent French Song Sketches" is intended for use by pupils studying French in their first year of Secondary School. Apart from the fact that it is based on songs, the material of these playlets may be described as original French. The songs (except for 2) correspond with those in "Fluent French for Secondary Schools Book 1" by the same authors, and are obtainable on disc. A cover note states: "This book therefore provides suggestions for classroom activities supplementary to the course, or it may equally well be used independently". The settings of the plays vary.

3. CONTENT. This drama-reader is divided into 10 short playlets roughly equal in length - 5 or 6 pages each. Some of the plays are based on one song, others on several. An example of the latter category is "Le Rêve" which owes its inspiration to the three songs ... "Bonsoir les Amis", "Meunier, tu dors" and "Frère Jacques". Typical of these playlets is "La Machine dela Vérité" based on the song "Un Eléphant, ça trompe, ça trompe": Maman and Papa decide that their children, Lucien and Amélie, are telling too many lies; so Papa buys the "truth-machine". This consists of three boxes. If someone tells a small lie one box opens and out comes an elephant's head, singing the song. One, two or three boxes open according to the gravity of the lie. The play ends with Papa pointing out to the children that he never lies, whereupon all three boxes open for the first time.

Although the vocabulary range of this reader is quite large the authors have included much repetition. It is assumed that some difficulties will be overcome by the fact that the texts are to be acted. There are no chapter-by-chapter lists of words and no end-vocabulary for reference.

The grammatical intake is kept well within the first year range, and is evenly distributed through the book. The principel tense is the present although there are examples of other tenses (including the perfect and a few instances of the present passive). Direct and indirect object pronouns in all persons are included as well as "y" and "en". Sentence structure on the whole remains simple and well within the experience of the pupils.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. There is no heading within the book listing notes. However there are several helpful remarks about stage settings and costumes at the beginning of the plays. A note in the preface has this advice: "There is no need to try and devise elaborate settings and costumes; homely improvisation will put the emphasis where it should be - on the acting. Teachers would do well to secure the co-operation of their pupils in this direction, and be ready to welcome any ideas they have to suggest".

5. PRESENTATION. "Fluent French Song Sketches" is printed in medium-sized type on mid-weight paper. Layout of the texts is as for dramatic form - characters' names being in upper-case letters and stage directions in italics. General presentation is as in English - e.g. a new scene is not indicated on the entry or exit of a character. French is used throughout the texts themselves.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. None.

7. ACTIVITIES. The songs in these plays form an integral part of the action, but can, of course, be used out of the context of the texts themselves.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. All the songs except one are available on five 10" discs.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Fluent French Song Sketches" is indeed an original and imaginative piece of work. Characters well-known in French songs, such as Cadet Rousselle and Frère Jacques, figure together with other people in sketches. Each song is the inspiration of a particular sketch which is printed immediately afterwards. Much of the substance of the song is cleverly worked into the sketch at different points. The author deserves considerable praise for having incorporated the often nonsensical words of songs into the context of amusing and convincing drama. His work makes good reading and acting for young pupils in the secondary school.

    Some parts of the collection may be found suitable for juniors. The sketches as a whole, however, are rather too long and their total vocabulary, including stage directions, too wide for Junior School children. Unless all the reading material can be covered rapidly and effortlessly, it would be better to postpone it to a later stage. Also a full appreciation of the sketches demands not only the ability to sing the songs but also a careful study of their meaning. The teacher of Primary School children will probably need to select those parts which are suitable for learning and acting.

BUTLIN, F.M.

Le Bateau et la Bicyclette

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 80), containing text, illustrations, exercises, verb-lists, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	3	6
Total cost	3	6

George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 182 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.
1954 - 2nd reprint 1961; hard cover; 4½" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Le Bateau et la Bicyclette" is intended for first year secondary school pupils. The story is original and not a translation. The cultural background of this reader is modern provincial France, though there is nothing included which is uniquely French. Illustrations are in keeping with the setting of the text itself.

3. CONTENT. This is a continuous story arranged in twenty-one chapters. The story concerns Jacques and his elder sister Denise, their younger brother and sister Pierre and Marie-Thérèse, the cat Titi and Guillaume, a friend of Jacques; Guillaume lives across the river from the others. One day Mother has to go and visit Father in hospital, and since Denise has gone to visit a friend, Jacques is left in charge of the two younger children. They go across the river in Jacques' boat for a picnic lunch. They call at Guillaume's for money for the bus home, because the boat is leaking, but find him out; they decide to walk, but Marie-Thérèse hurts her foot. Jacques decides to take Guillaume's new bicycle which he has left outside. Back home Jacques' professor Grandfather arrives for tea and by mistake rides off on the new bicycle. The loss is discovered and Jacques and Guillaume (who has just arrived) inform the police. Everything turns out all right in the end and Grandfather buys the children a new boat.

The end-vocabulary contains some 650 words which cover a wide range of expression. One or two infrequent words occur (e.g. Boiter, pan), but these are very few and far between. The vocabulary burden is constant throughout the reader.

The grammatical range of "Le Bateau et la Bicyclette" is restricted to make the reader suitable for first year pupils. There is a note in the Preface about the use of tenses: "The present tense is used almost entirely throughout. When I have had to use another tense, as for instance in the phrase 'quand il viendra' the meaning of the verb is given in the vocabulary. These 'other tenses' are usually future and perfect (often with "être"), though sometimes the imperfect occurs; to be noted is 'nous ne serions jamais arrivés' and occurrences of 'aurais dû', 'aurions pu', etc." 'Y' and 'en' and likewise direct and indirect object pronouns occur and there are instances of possessive pronouns. The end-vocabulary lists: 'tiens', thine; 'tienne', yours.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. This reader is printed in medium type on rather thin paper, although the cover is stiff board. Apart from the first two chapters, which are in narrative form, the entire text is in dramatic form. Characters are printed in upper-case letters, with directions in italics. The text and directions are all in French, as are the verb-lists and exercises. Heavy type is used for the verbs where they are conjugated at the end of the book. The chapters average one to two pages in length.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Each chapter is usually accompanied by one black and white line drawing. This depicts either the characters of the chapter in a group, or one or two characters in an incident from the text. The frontispiece includes all five children together. The illustrations are naturalistic in character.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Fifteen pages of exercises follow the text. These are divided according to chapters. The exercises vary in character, but each chapter has a comprehension drill which may include questions about the pupil. Following this drill are others about grammatical points. Sometimes there is an exercise in which the student is required to supply a verb in the correct form.

The verb-lists following the exercises are intended to be a comprehensive treatment of the irregular verbs contained within the text. A verb is presented for example, 'avoir' with examples from the text and others. A list of idiomatic expressions, not necessarily in the text, is then given. Verbs are conjugated and the forms of the present participle, imperfect, future, conditional and perfect are included. Within the verb-lists there are exercises to give practice in the forms under consideration.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Le Bateau et la Bicyclette" is a series of spirited and amusing playlets. Though written for secondary school pupils the same subject matter would interest juniors. At whatever stage the playlets are used, they are intended to be adapted for classroom acting rather then for reading round the class. For this reason, as far as juniors are concerned, the small size of the print, the rather indifferent illustrations and the inclusion of verb tables need not come in for criticism.

For use with juniors these playlets would require a good deal of simplification. There are cases of elaborate syntax, e.g. 'Mes enfants, poisque je serai sorti toute la journée, et que Grand-père n'aime pas rester longtemps tout seul, voulez-vous l'inviter à goûter avec nous?', and difficult tenses, e.g. 'Tu n'aurais pas dû amener Titi'. Were it not for the difficulty of determining what is basic grammar and what is not in a series of independent playlets, this work might have been considered beyond the scope of the bibliography. The playlets, however, are short and an enterprising teacher would have little difficulty in adapting them for acting purposes.

The questionnaires are well prepared, but some of the exercises do not conform to the principle that grammar should be practised in complete utterances. Drawings in general serve their purpose, but are at times unconvincing, e.g. p. 38.

CARRE, A.L.

Paul et Jacqueline

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

	£	s.	d.
a) Pupils' reader (pp. 64) containing text, illustrations and end-vocabulary:		4	6
b) Tape 1 reel (5" at $3\frac{3}{4}$ i.p.s.): (also obtainable at $7\frac{1}{2}$ i.p.s. at £4)	£3	0	0
Total cost	£3	4	6

a) University of London Press, London, 1957. Soft cover: $6\frac{3}{4}$" x $8\frac{1}{2}$".
b) Tutor Tape Co. Ltd., London.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A first reader for pupils of primary school age. Whereas the brother and sister in the story are aged 9-10 years, it is claimed that even the youngest beginner will be able to understand without any difficulty. The stories are original, not translations of materials published in English. The cultural setting is partly English and partly French. There is no statement of aims.

3. CONTENT. The material is arranged under twenty-four chapter headings, each chapter consisting of a series of independent episodes based upon the daily life of the Dumoulin family. In this respect "Paul et Jacqueline" follows the lines of a course-book rather than a reader. Scenes depicted are in the various rooms of the home (including the bathroom) as well as in the garden, the street and the classroom. The young reader is taken further afield in the chapters about picnicking, camp life, a visit to the sea-side and fishing in a river. In the final chapter a more modern note is struck by a dream about flying saucers.

The end-vocabulary lists about 450 French words with English meanings. These arise naturally out of the situations chosen, and occasionally exceed the Choquette vocabulary and Le Français Fondamental (1^{o} degré) e.g. une antenne, le guidon, le ressort. The figure of 450, however, results from the manner in which the words are listed, e.g. 6 different forms of 'regarder' appear separately. Vocabulary is introduced at a regular rate, the texts being kept fairly short.

The grammatical mechanisms used cover a normal range for first year work. Simple sentences and the present tense are used throughout.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHERS. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Paul et Jacqueline" has the bright appearance of a children's book. The paper is stout. The type used for text and vocabulary is large and clear. The text is in narrative form and chapters are arranged so that each sentence begins on a new line. The proportion of conversational forms found in the text is not high but increases in the latter half. English appears only in the bilingual end-vocabulary and in remarks on the back cover. English forms of punctuation are preferred.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. A full page of illustrations accompanies each chapter. Apart from the coloured pictures on the front cover the drawings are in black and white outline with grey shading. They are of people and objects portrayed in a situation. There is sometimes a single picture illustrating the title of the chapter. At other times there are 4 or 5 smaller pictures of different events occurring in the chapter. Pictures in several colours and of this smaller size, appear on the front cover.

7. ACTIVITIES. The music of the one song appears in the text, and the four verses are printed on the opposite page.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. **AUDIO AIDS.** The tape has a playing time of thirty-two minutes. It records the whole of the text of the chapters and the whole of the song. The French is spoken once without any spaces for repetition. The quality is similar to that of 'pronunciation familière ralentie'.*

10. **GENERAL COMMENTS.** "Paul et Jacqueline" will be found useful for children in their first year of French. The practice of placing each sentence on a new line gives the reader time to infer the connection between two consecutive sentences when the train of thought is not in fact continuous. Within the simple range of language made possible in this process, the text is not without interest and humorous touches. The regular provision of good illustrations forms a suitable basis for supplementary oral work, though it is a pity that pictures in colour should appear on the cover only. This reader is one of a relatively small number which, while presenting French as a foreign language, come into the category of attractive children's books.

    As in the case of certain other readers described in this bibliography, "Paul et Jacqueline" is a compromise between a reader and a course-book. Treating it as a reader the teacher will be well advised to give preliminary practice in some of the grammatical mechanisms and vocabulary occurring in the text. Otherwise too many new features of the language will be presented to the class at once.

    The total absence of exercises or questions is to be regretted, as some provision for the re-use of the language of the text is normal in a reader.

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* Passy's expression for a model considered suitable for the teaching of the early stages of French as a foreign language. It is based on the idea that a conversational model slightly slower and more firmly articulated than that of a native speaker permits the young foreign learner a clearer perception of speech. This is considered to react favourably upon the formation of speech sequences, which when apprehended correctly can afterwards be said at any desired pace.

CARRE, A.L.

Scènes de France

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 64), containing texts, illustrations, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	3	6
Total cost	3	6

University of London Press Ltd., St. Paul's House, Warwick Lane,
London E.C.4. 1960 (4th impression 1964). Soft cover, $5\frac{1}{2}$" x $7\frac{3}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This reader is intended for first year secondary school pupils and can be used after the early stages as a first reader. The material and language are original and the cultural setting is modern France, provincial and metropolitan. There has been an obvious attempt to put over those aspects of French life which are different from English life and many typical customs are described. The illustrations are in keeping with the cultural setting of the text itself.

3. CONTENT. "Scènes de France" (which contains no preface or introduction by the author) is divided into twenty-four short chapters. Each of these stands in its own right and there is no story running through the book, although several chapters concern the life of the Dubois family. The opening lessons are concerned with French provincial life: there is a chapter on the village postman; another describes a Breton wedding; another is about buying stamps at a tobacconist's. The Tour de France passes through the village and there is a description of a small Breton fishing port. Several chapters are devoted to features of life in Paris: the underground, the Eiffel Tower, a river-bank bookseller.

The end-vocabulary lists between 500 and 600 words. The introduction of new vocabulary is provided for in a methodical way but the author makes no mention of this himself. The actual vocabulary range is quite large and in each chapter derives from the particular situation being described. A few unusual words do occur (e.g. radiotéléphoniste, passerelle, bock), though there are not many of these, and the majority of the vocabulary is well within the scope of 'Le Français Fondamental'.

The grammar range of 'Scènes de France' is in keeping with that of a first reader. Sentence structure begins at a very simple level and becomes more complex towards the end. No use is made of direct or indirect object pronouns and demonstrative and possessive pronouns have been avoided. The narrative tense is the present and irregular and reflexive verbs have been freely included. Most of the complex sentences are of the relative type though the oblique cases of the relative pronoun have been avoided.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Scènes de France" is set in well-spaced large type on mid-weight paper. Each sentence begins on a new line and dialogue is punctuated in the English style. The proportion of conversation is quite large. French is used throughout the texts and the only English (apart from the title page) is in the end-vocabulary. Each chapter occupies its own page.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Most of the chapters have a full-page clear black-and-white illustration facing the text. Usually this depicts the general scene being described in the chapter. Sometimes there are four smaller illustrations facing the text: these, where appropriate, tell the story in pictures. The pictures often contain a large amount of detail and would be suitable for discussion and vocabulary work.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. All the features of "Paul et Jacqueline" are seen in construction of this reader by the same author. It is short and quite simple enough for use with juniors. The full-page illustrations that go with each chapter permit various forms of oral practice.

    Perhaps the most noteworthy achievement of the author is to have introduced the child to a series of genuinely French scenes at a time when the level of French used is still very elementary. It has, moreover, been done without the creation of any particular difficulties of comprehension. Attention is drawn to features of French life that interest children, and juniors can become familiar with what they should look for when they go to France. The teacher also is left free to adopt any approach he wishes and should be faced with a pleasant task.

    In some ways the author's work is a little unconventional. Changing scenes from real life are normally the field of the writer of a main course, while supplementary readers are associated with continuous and exciting adventures. Here we have the themes of the main course worked into little scenes and shown without any grammatical sections or exercises. Though interesting by themselves one is inclined to wonder whether they would form suitable supplementary reading to the rigours of a main course exploiting similar themes.

    The illustrations are effective because they are unmistakeably French and fairly comprehensive. Some teachers, however, will regret the absence of both questions and exercises.

CEPPI, M.

Petits Contes pour les Petits

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 79), containing text, chapter vocabularies, illustrations, questions and exercises, and end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	0
Total cost	2	0

G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London 1937.
12th reprint 1963. Soft cover, 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A first reader for Primary Schools. It is described in the sub-title as 'a very simple reader', and gives in French well-known English fairy stories intended for the very young - second or third term of First Year of French'. The age of commencement is not stated. The cultural content is international. No special aim is mentioned.

3. CONTENT. The twelve fairy stories are French versions of Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Hop O' My Thumb, Bluebeard, The Three Bears, Puss in Boots, Beauty and the Beast, Sleeping Beauty, Jack the Giant-Killer, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Little Match Girl, and The Intrepid Lead Soldiers. The stories are of uniform length, each occupying about three pages. The basic narrative of each is told briefly.

For effect, fairy stories depend to some extent upon the use of bizarre, picturesque words. For this reason it is not profitable to examine this collection in the light of any particular word-count or consider all terms from the point of view of their usefulness to children. The French-English end-vocabulary described as complete claims to contain approximately 720 words. In this reckoning every form of personal pronoun, possessive adjective, etc., counts as a separate word. The rate at which new words are introduced is not regular, varying from 11 to 33 per story. Though the largest new vocabulary occurs in the last story, the intake of new words does not show a steady progression from the beginning.

The grammatical mechanisms used are for the most part quite simple. In an introductory note 'the almost exclusive use of the present tense' is claimed as a feature of the reader. Other verb forms, however (e.g. the future tense, the perfect tense and the past participle), prove indispensable in the conversational exchanges. As regards structure the claim made is 'extreme simplicity of language, nearly every sentence beginning on a new line'. This does not prevent the author from including certain rather complex constructions such as subordinate clauses with 'si' and 'quand', 'lui ordonne de + infinitive', 'il s'imagine que....' etcetera.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text is printed in fairly large, clear type on thin paper. English appears in the introductory note and in the bracketed sub-title of each story. Narrative form of presentation is used throughout. Conversational forms, of which there is a considerable proportion in all stories except the last two, are punctuated in the English fashion. In addition to the comprehensive end-vocabulary, French-English vocabularies appear at the head of each chapter.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Each story is accompanied by a full-page illustration enclosed in a rectangular frame. Black, white and grey are used for all pictures except those on the cover which are blue on a grey background. Objects are depicted in situations.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. There are three exercises for each story. They are printed in a section of the reader between the stories and the end-vocabulary. All directions are given in English. In all but two stories the first exercise is a questionnaire containing between six and ten questions. Though most of these are about the story, a few are either general or apply the vocabulary of the reader to the personal circumstances of the pupil. The second exercise gives varied practice in functional grammar. This includes filling blanks, replacing nouns by pronouns, changing sentences into the negative form, completing sentences, creating sentences around given verb forms, and asking questions in French. The third consists of the retranslation into French of ten English sentences about the story just completed.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. Though no statement is made about the precise age of the pupils for whom the reader is intended, the themes themselves are considered suitable for juniors. Tribute must be paid to the author for his skilful simplification of the stories. In addition the full-page illustrations and the varied exercises are helpful to the teacher. The use of fairy stories in French has the obvious advantage that the children's comprehension is aided by previous familiarity with the same material in the mother tongue.

    At the same time there is a danger that, owing to the subject matter of fairy stories, this reader may be placed in the hands of young children before they are ready for the language range it draws upon. However simple fairy stories may appear when expressed in the mother tongue, they can hardly be told within the vocabulary and structures of first-year French. Despite the author's use of simple constructions the vocabulary load is a heavy one for children at this stage. Not all of it is either useful to children or easy to teach by direct method procedures. In order to maintain the pace that an interesting story requires, the teacher may feel forced to deal with little more than comprehension of text. And for this purpose the general construction of the reader is likely to encourage the use of translation, a practice that is out of harmony with sound language teaching.

    All the exercises except those involving translation can be safely recommended as contributing to the written or oral fluency of the pupils. The full page illustrations are helpful both for comprehension of text and further oral practice.

POOR ORIGINAL COPY - BEST AVAILABLE AT TIME FILMED

CEPPI, Marc

First Year French Reader

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 63), containing texts, illustrations, exercises, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	0
Total cost	2	0

G. Bell & Sons Ltd., London. 1932, 12th reprint 1963.
Soft cover: 5" x 7¼".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. As the title suggests "First Year French Reader" is written for first-year pupils in the Secondary School. It is a collection of very short playlets - twenty-four in number. The material and the French itself are original. The cultural setting is French though there is very little that is uniquely French. This book has been reprinted in an unchanged forum. Some of the illustrations (and one or two of the stories) appear to be out-dated.

3. CONTENT. Many of the stories - which are all in dramatic form - are only one or two pages in length. Typical of these are "Arithmétique" and "50 Pour Cent". In "Arithmétique" we encounter Papa and Alfred (7 years old). Alfred is insisting that he has only four fingers including his thumb on each hand. Papa counts out aloud the right hand fingers - but Alfred still insists and counts his left hand fingers: "Premier, second, deuxième, troisième, quatrième". In "50 Pour Cent", M. Dutrac goes up in a plane for the first time. To scare him the pilot (who is the only other occupant) switches off the engine momentarily in mid-flight. He goes on to say that 50% of the people on the ground must have thought they were going to crash. M. Dutrac replies that 50% of those in the aircraft also had that impression.

Just over 800 words are listed in the end-vocabulary. These cover quite a large range and include one or two unusual words (e.g. baïonnette, aumône, panthère). Vocabulary arises directly from the situations and many of the more common words used recur frequently.

The grammar range is consistent with a first-year reader. The present tense is used as the main narrative tense, though there are several examples of other tenses, especially of the future (including certain irregular verbs: e.g. 'fera'). Sentence structure is kept relatively simple and complex sentences are rare. Direct and indirect object pronouns in all persons are freely included, as well as relative pronouns.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. 'First Year French Reader' is printed in large type on midweight paper; clarity seems to have suffered slightly in the many reprints. The text is laid out in normal dramatic form: characters' names are printed in upper-case type and stage directions are given in italics. French is used throughout the texts, but the majority of the exercises are in English.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. The illustrations are black-and-white line drawings - one to each playlet, approximately one third of a page in size. As mentioned above, the drawings depict people dressed in the styles of the early thirties and are also drawn in the style of that period.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Three pages of exercises are included after the main text. These are divided according to chapter. Each chapter is given five questions which are mainly in English; these range from comprehension questions to grammatical and translation questions. E.g. V:5 'The French for: in front of her; in front of him'; V11:5 'Give the negative form of: coupez-le en deux'.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "A First French Reader" is a series of playlets for pupils in the first secondary year. Despite certain out-of-date features mentioned in GENERAL DESCRIPTION above, the collection has a considerable appeal. An introductory note states that teachers themselves are contributors to the books in this series. The playlets are varied in type, some based upon continuing action and others upon conversational exchanges leading to a witty conclusion. In this way both situational and reflective forms of speech are represented.

The simplicity of the language and the situations, as well as the brevity and level of interest, make these playlets a genuine possibility for juniors. Those with continuing action are likely to prove more suitable for children taught by audio-visual methods. They can be learnt and acted whether the class is able to read the text or not.

This reader is good enough to warrant a new and more up-to-date edition. The old-style aviator, for example, depicted on page 37 would hardly impress the modern boy favourably. The comprehension questions printed in English at the end could be replaced by a questionnaire in French. One or two of the playlets could profitably give way to others more in tune with the day and age.

The provision of comprehension questions in English will not commend itself to many teachers. Exercises in translation and conjugation are equally disappointing. The illustrations are not without merit, but are enclosed in a very small area.

ELSTON, C.S.

First French Classroom Comedies

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 80), containing texts, vocabularies:

	s.	d.
	3	0
Total cost	3	0

University of London Press, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.
1961 (2nd impression 1963). Soft cover: 5" x 7¼".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This collection of short playlets is intended for early use with first-year secondary school pupils. The material is original in story content for the most part, and where unoriginal represents the adaptation of an idea rather than a translation from an existing story (e.g. No. 14 - 'Au Bord de la Mer' - a version of the folk-poem 'There's a hole in my bucket......'). In the Preface the author says that this collection is in response to requests for sketches similar to the first six in 'French Classroom Comedies'. The cultural setting varies, though a substantial proportion of the plays take place against a modern French background and involve children.

3. CONTENT. There are twenty sketches in this collection. Most of these have an amusing content to maintain interest. Typical of the subject matter is, for example, 'Une Tablette de Chocolat'. Three children go into a sweetshop; one asks for a bar of chocolate. The shopkeeper has to climb up to a high shelf for the chocolate. When he has come down the second child asks for another of the same chocolate. This time, while he is on the steps, the shopkeeper asks the third child if he wants the same and the child says 'No". Down from the steps, the man asks the third child what he wants: 'Two bars of chocolate, please!' Episodes of a similar type occur in a café (an Englishman asking for eggs for his breakfast and causing a sensation), a post office, at the customs, etc.

The vocabularies at the end of the book are arranged according to sketch - there is no combined vocabulary. Each is preceded by an English translation of the French title. Some six hundred words are included altogether. There seems to have been an attempt to control the vocabulary introduced in each sketch. Vocabulary arises from the situation, and it is clear that the author has used the situation material to introduce a wide variety of associated words (e.g. in the play 'Le Médicament de Maman', many parts of the body are systematically mentioned; in the sketch 'Un Bon Client' which takes place in a green-grocer's, there is mention of a wide variety of fruit and vegetables, etc.). There are, however, several unusual words for this level, e.g. oeillet, 'en conserve' = tinned, recommandé = registered (of letters), oeufs brouillés.

The author states in the Preface that 'as is natural with such subject matter, the tense used is mostly the present. After the first few sketches, where this is the only tense, we get some infrequent examples of the perfect tense, though always with 'avoir'. In the first six playlets an attempt has been made to restrict the language used to one or two basic structures only. Later these become more complex and subordinate clauses are freely included. The pronouns 'y' and 'en' occur as well as direct and indirect object pronouns in all persons.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text of these playlets is set in medium-sized type on mid-weight paper and laid out in normal dramatic form; personages are in capitals, directions in italics. Punctuation is as in English, and French is used throughout the texts. The plays vary in length from one to eight pages, though the average is about three pages.

6. **ILLUSTRATIONS.** None.

7. **ACTIVITIES.** None.

8. **EXERCISES.** None.

9. **AUDIO AIDS.** None.

10. **GENERAL COMMENTS.** This collection, prepared in answer to a teachers' demand for something simpler for the beginning of the secondary stage, has some relevance for Primary Schools. The first eight playlets are simple and brief enough to be used unadapted with juniors. Three of them experiment with a technique giving frequent repetition to certain structural forms. This serves a useful purpose and is reminiscent of the technique used by the authors of certain prose readers to tell stories of the cumulative variety. Some of the later playlets, however, grow to a considerable length, branch out into extensive vocabulary and contain an admixture of sentences that are too complicated for juniors. The disadvantages of a reader (as opposed to a main course) exhibiting quite different levels of language lies in the fact that children for whom the first part is suitable are only getting half a book. The average intake of thirty new words per playlet throughout the book may be considered heavy for a supplementary reader. This stands in addition to, and does not necessarily correspond with, the vocabulary of the children's main courses.

    The playlets are spirited and full of action. The Primary School teacher would be well advised to concentrate on the earlier pieces and to use them for acting purposes at intervals in the French course. At a certain stage children could be encouraged to make similar playlets of their own. As the comedies are intended for acting rather than classroom reading, it is not necessary to criticise the absence of exercises and illustrations.

GARRET, N.H.

Daniel Dufour

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 79) containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises, verb-list:

	s.	d.
	3	9
Total cost	3	9

Macmillan & Co. Ltd., St. Martin's Street, London, W.C.2.
1960, 3rd reprint 1964. Soft cover: $5\frac{1}{4}$" x $7\frac{1}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Daniel Dufour" is an elementary reader intended for pupils 'in the early stages' - i.e. the first year of a secondary school. The material is original and the cultural setting is that of a French family in London and later in provincial France. The illustrations are consistent with the setting of the text, though they contain little of typical French life.

3. CONTENT. The text of this reader, divided into fourteen chapters corresponding with the episodes, gives a picture of the life of the Dufour family. Pierre, who is eleven years old, lives with his parents in London; M. Dufour works at the French Embassy. Pierre, who is bi-lingual goes to school in London. He is fond of animals and keeps several pets including two dogs, one of which 'n'aime pas le facteur' and forms the subject of one chapter. Every year the family go to France on holiday where they stay with Mme. Dufour's brother on his farm at Domrémy. They take the car over by plane and there is an incident when M. Dufour forgets that he must drive on the right. Pierre's uncle and aunt have three children, Charles and Louis (twelve year old twins) and Gabrielle (eleven years old). Various adventures round the farm are recounted, including a scene in the orchard where Daniel climbs a tree to pick the green apples and an incident one night when Daniel discovers a burglar. The final chapter describes the last-minute dash to the airport on the journey back to England.

Vocabulary is extensive and arises from the particular situation in each chapter. No statement is made as to any control of vocabulary. About seven hundred and thirty words are listed in the end-vocabulary and many of these are infrequent in normal conversation and outside the scope of, say, Le Français Fondamental, e.g. essaim, ruche. Each chapter is followed by a short list of phrases with the appropriate English translation.

Throughout the reader the author has used only the present tense. Direct and indirect object pronouns, oblique cases of the relative, demonstrative and possessive pronouns have been avoided. Sentences are kept short and complex sentences are avoided, though quite a wide range of idiomatic expressions has been included.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text of "Daniel Dufour" is set in large, clear type on mid-weight paper. There is relatively little conversation and the layout is normal for narrative interspersed with dialogue; punctuation is in the English style. The entire text and exercises are in French; the lists of phrases have English translations and the verb-lists have translations and headings in English.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. These are black and white line drawings accompanying the text. They frequently occupy one third of the page and average two per chapter, illustrating the main episode. Occasionally smaller illustrations occur depicting one character or minor episode. Most of the pictures show the characters in action.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Thirteen pages of 'Questionnaires et exerciçes' are grouped together after the text. These are subdivided under chapter headings and consist of between ten and twenty general and specific comprehension questions about the text of the chapter - its events and characters. There follows the instruction: 'Ecrivez six phrases sur:.....' and one or two incidents or characters. The third type of exercise is a conjugation exercise. Sometimes here the pupil is required to conjugate in the present tense a single verb, e.g. 'Je me réveille', sometimes a whole phrase, e.g. 'Je demeure en Angleterre'. Occasionally there follows a fourth exercise in which the pupil is required to put some sentences into the plural. The 'liste de verbes' which is appended gives models for each conjugation in the present tense, followed by a list of verbs.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Daniel Dufour" is a series of self-contained chapters rather than a continuous story. The absence of a continuous plot prevents the reader from becoming truly excited.

The questionnaires are well constructed and provide plenty of questions. The other exercises lack variety and some of them, e.g. conjugation, savour of traditional main-course work. Even in a main course, if children are to communicate effectively, the complete paradigm, or conjugation must be somehow broken down and its parts used functionally. It is, after all, not an approach to proficiency in the use of verb forms but a final synthesis of what has previously been taught.

GARRET, N.H.

Jean Bonnard - Petit Ecolier

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 64) containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises, verb-list:

	s.	d.
	2	3
Total cost	2	3

George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 182 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.
1933, 22nd reprint 1962. Soft cover: 4½" x 6½".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Jean Bonnard" is described in the Preface as a 'Reader for beginners', and is primarily intended for first-year secondary school pupils. The story is original and not a translation. The cultural setting is provincial France with one chapter set in Paris and another in Chamonix; there is however very little background material peculiarly French. The illustrations accompanying the text are in keeping with the general setting.

3. CONTENT. "Jean Bonnard" is divided into twelve chapters, each self-contained episode in the life of Jean, who is ten years old. Jean's adventures include his first visit to the dentist, where he has a tooth out and is relieved to find the experience less painful than he had imagined; a visit to the zoo; an accident in which Jean, disobeying his mother, rides a friend's horse and has a bad fall; and a trip to Paris and Chamonix with his uncle and aunt and cousin Maurice who is older than Jean and much admired because of his skill at football and tennis.

The authoress makes no mention of her method of selecting vocabulary for "Jean Bonnard", but she does state in the preface that an effort has been made to make it large and varied and that it 'is designed to give the pupil a good knowledge of the most common nouns and verbs'. The end-vocabulary contains some 900 words ranging over quite a wide variety of situations. There is no apparent control of the introduction of vocabulary though there is some deliberate repetition of the most ordinary phrases and expressions.

In preparing a beginner's reader the authoress has used only the present tense of verbs and care has been taken to avoid direct and indirect object pronouns, demonstrative and possessive pronouns and the oblique cases of the relative. Sentence structure is on the whole kept very simple and clear and any complex sentences are relatively uncomplicated. The overall grammatical range is consistent with a first reader.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. In the preface the authoress mentions that: 'in the chapters dealing with the visit to Paris and the holidays spent in France the skilful teacher will be able to introduce many interesting details and much useful information, thereby supplying the right background to the further study of the French language and people'. There are no further detailed notes for the teacher.

5. PRESENTATION. "Jean Bonnard" is set in large, clear type on normal weight paper. The layout is normal for narrative, though it is common for dialogue to be contained within a block of description: i.e. dialogue does not always, in fact, rarely, begin on a new line. Punctuation is in the English style. Chapters average two or three pages in length and French is used throughout the text of the stories and exercises; the verb-lists and examples of the conjugations are also in French throughout.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are six black and white line drawings in this reader. Scattered through the text, these are usually one quarter to one third of a page in size and depict one or two characters in a situation from the text they accompany. The illustrations are not detailed.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Eight pages of 'questionnaires et exercices' follow the text; these are divided to correspond with the chapters. Each chapter has two types of exercise: a) up to 20 comprehension or general questions in French, and b) exercises of the type: 'écrivez 5 phrases sur .....' or 'décrivez .....' - again based on the text. The exercises are followed by a list of verbs. This is divided into five sections: 1-3 give a model of each of the three regular conjugations followed by a list of verbs in the text in the particular conjugation; 4 lists the irregular verbs with their conjugations - sections 1-4 have no English translations; 5 is a list of 'phrases à noter' and gives 23 common phrases with their English translations.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. In twelve chapters of two to three pages each the authoress gives an account of events in the daily life of a ten-year-old boy. All normal activities are mentioned at some point and a good deal of serviceable vocabulary is taught in the process. The suggestions for self-expression and renarration that follow each questionnaire show an appreciation of the importance of the re-use of the language in the text. Tables of conjugated verbs, however, do not add to the attractions of a supplementary reader.

Though designed for pupils of eleven years, this reader appears to be simple enough for juniors a year younger. The thread of simple, straightforward action makes the text easy to teach. French expression, however, leaves something to be desired. Although the author's grammar is correct throughout this reader there are times when the sentence construction is rather childish: '.....Jean aime beaucoup sa maman, mais quand il est méchant ou impoli sa maman grande son petit garçon et alors Jean est très triste'. Throughout one is very conscious that this is French written by a foreigner.

Owing to the essentially narrative form of presentation and the rather ordinary character of the events described, this book will hardly appeal to those who are looking for excitement. At the same time the very simplicity and usefulness of the language found in the text can, with skilful teaching, lead to much enjoyable self-expression by the children. On balance such a reader contributes more to a sound foundation in French than a more stimulating book that does not contain the terms needed for the expression of ordinary thoughts and actions.

Exercises are well designed, but the list of verb forms preceding the end vocabulary will not appeal to pupils. Illustrations, though rather scarce, are of satisfactory quality.

GILBERT, Robin

Pierre et les Cambrioleurs

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 62), containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	3
Total cost	2	3

Macmillan & Co. Ltd., St. Martin's Street, London, W.C.2.
1951 - 6th reprint 1961. Soft cover: $5\frac{1}{4}$" x $7\frac{1}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This reader is intended for pupils in their first year of secondary school. The story and language used are original. The setting of the book is modern France, although there is nothing in the story which is uniquely French. Illustrations accompany the text and reflect the cultural background.

3. CONTENT. "Pierre et les Cambrioleurs" is a continuous story divided into twelve short chapters. Pierre, aged twelve, is due to go off on his bicycle on a camping holiday. He gets up early and leaves but, passing his headmaster's house, he notices a car parked outside. He decides to investigate, because he knows the headmaster to be away on holiday. Discovering burglars, he returns home and tells his sister to fetch the police. He goes back to the car. The burglars come out and drive off - with Pierre sitting on the luggage rack leaving a trail of his clothes to mark the route. The car stops in a wood, and while Pierre hides in the bushes, one of the burglars changes the number plates. They drive away leaving Pierre behind. A policeman arrives in a car with Annette, Pierre's sister, and the chase continues. Later they discover the car outside a café and the policeman arrests the two men.

The end-vocabulary contains between 500 and 600 words; these are mostly general and common, although there are several which are outside the normal range of, say, "Le Français Fondamental" (e.g. agrafer, s'accroupit, se dégager). There does not seem to be any specific plan in the introduction of new words. These arise from the situations as the story proceeds.

The grammatical range has been restricted in this reader to make it suitable for beginners. The narrative is in the present tense and third person direct and indirect object pronouns have been carefully avoided throughout. The author has included some of the more common irregular and reflexive verbs. The sentence structures, very simple at the beginning, appear to have become more complex as the reader proceeds. Subordinate clauses are mainly restricted to temporal (quand) and relative.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHERS. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Pierre et les Cambrioleurs" is set in clear, medium-sized type on mid-weight paper. The layout of the text is normal for narrative with occasional dialogue (some chapters have a large proportion of conversation). Dialogue is introduced with inverted commas and the punctuation follows normal English practice. French is used throughout the text and exercises, and in the "Résumé de l'Histoire" that follows the text.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Black-and-white line drawings are interspersed throughout the text - often several per chapter. They are usually small and illustrate a person or object mentioned in the text; larger pictures depict one or two characters in an event from the story. The pictures contain only immediate detail - i.e. they are usually without any detailed background.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Exercises follow each chapter, except the last (which is followed by a short summary of the story). These are divided into two parts: a) six incomplete sentences where the pupils are required to fill in the blanks with words or phrases they find in the text itself, and b) six comprehension questions based on the subject matter of the chapter.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. This reader provides a truly exciting and continuous story for first-year pupils of a secondary school. The theme would be absorbing for juniors as well. The combination of simple, straightforward sentences (which predominate) and a gripping concrete narrative can go a long way towards solving the problem of teaching comprehension. Nevertheless an examination of the vocabulary used makes one hesitate to recommend this reader for juniors. It might appear to be successful in the hands of the loquacious type of teacher who likes to spend much of the time clarifying the French. The linguistic gain of the children, however, would be largely on the passive plane.

    The number of words shown in an end-vocabulary can be rather misleading. In this case the figure of between 500 and 600 is difficult to reconcile with the length and difficulty of many terms found in the text. One can only conclude that little reference has been made to word frequency lists. This makes the reader unsuitable for juniors who need to acquire a basic speech vocabulary.

    Exercises are useful but contain little material. The illustrations are on the whole small but always clear and expressive.

HIRST, M. S.

Les Trois Ours

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

	s.	d.
Pupils' reader (pp. 23) containing texts and illustrations:	2	0
Tape 1 reel (5" at $3\frac{3}{4}$ i.p.s.)	17	6
Total cost	19	6

George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London.
1965. Soft cover. 5" x $7\frac{1}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This reader is specially designed for the Primary School. There is no statement as to the age of the children for whom it is intended. The setting is neutral as is to be expected in a story of this kind. The accompanying tape recording is for the use of teachers in class.

3. CONTENT. "Les Trois Ours" provides in simplified form, and without mentioning any names, the essence of the tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. It starts with a description of the bears, their house in the forest, and the various domestic articles of which there are three. Finding their soup too hot, the bears go for a walk in the forest. A curious and hungry little girl passes by and calls in at the empty house. In turn she tries the soup, chairs and beds belonging to the bears, and falls asleep on the small bed. Then the bears return, make the well-known observations about an unknown intruder, and discover the little girl who runs away.

   Owing to the extensive use of repetition made possible by the nature of this particular story, the total number of words used has been kept very low. Apart from what are listed in "Le Français Fondamental" as "Mots Grammaticaux", there are only about 60 words (including a few idiomatic expressions), about half of which are verb forms.

   With the exception of a few cases of the present tense in conversational forms, the narrative is written entirely within the perfect and imperfect tenses. Though verbs of all categories are included, only the third person of these two tenses is used. Grammatical forms are very simple. They include, in addition to articles, random cases of the following: numbers, agreement of adjectives, simple prepositions, common adverbs, possessive adjectives, the imperative (1st person), reflexive verbs, demonstrative adjectives, and exclamatory "Oh". Besides pronoun subjects, there is the indefinite pronoun "quelqu'un", which is indispensable to the story. Negative forms include "ne ... pas" and "ne ... plus jamais".

   The simple sentences that form the text are here and there linked by one or more cases of the conjunction "et". Some of the longer sentences thus produced (e.g. Page 15, line 4, or Page 19, line 6) add up to over 20 words.

4. NOTES FOR THE TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Les Trois Ours" is set in clear, medium-sized type on mid-weight paper. The text is all in French, but punctuation is of the English type. While the main story is told as a narrative, conversational forms are fully represented. The book is continuous, without any division into chapters.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are between one and three pictures on each page. They are black and white outline drawings of various sizes. Some depict whole situations, others only persons or objects in isolation. On early pages they fill most of the space, but the amount of text per page increases progressively.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. The text on tape is in authentic spoken French. Playing time is just under 10 minutes. The main narrative is given in an adult voice (male), while the speaking parts of the bears provide scope for three persons of markedly contrasting voice register. Sense groups and intonation patterns are brought out in expressive French.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Les Trois Ours" is a short, simple reader written specially for the British Primary Schools. The problem of general comprehension is largely solved by the familiarity of the story, the many illustrations, and the constant repetition of language forms. To render comprehension precise and enable the children to re-use the language, it still remains for the teacher to take measures to clarify the meaning of the terms used.

The teacher choosing this reader is likely to be confronted with the task of deciding which age level can derive most benefit. Whereas the tense range would certainly extend a top class, the theme itself appears suited to younger juniors. The French text is suitable for teaching purposes. Although the free linking of sentences by the use of the co-ordinating conjunction "et" may not appeal to all teachers, this process helps to frame natural sequences and to provide variety of sentence length. The pictures are clearly drawn and arranged in close association with relevant portions of the text.

It is to be hoped that readers designed to be used with tape recordings will become more general. Above all the audio aid draws attention to the importance of intonation and sense groups, which always ought to be acquired with the basic patterns of the language. It also brings life to the language of the text on paper, and in doing so makes it more influential. One notes here, for example, that the bears comment upon the unauthorised use of their property in a philosophical rather than an indignant manner, a fact which carries its own lesson for children.

POOR ORIGINAL COPY - BEST AVAILABLE AT TIME FILMED

HOLLENDORF, O.

Tiki et Taki

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader containing text, verb tabulations, illustrations and end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
Part I (Dans Leur Île, pp. 52)	3	9
Part II (Chez les Enfants, pp. 72)	4	0
Total cost	7	9

Macmillan, London, 1935.
Book I, 7th reprint, 1965.
Book II, 4th reprint, 1961. Soft cover: 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A reader for primary school pupils. No statement is made as to the aim of the reader, the age of the children for whom it is intended, or whether it is a first reader or not. An introductory note is addressed to "mes petits élèves". The authoress was formerly teacher of French in the American Community School and the Junior College for Women, Beirut, Lebanon. The stories told appear to be original and not a translation from English. There is a general western cultural background.

3. CONTENT. Each part, or Book, is divided into thirty-two sections called lessons, and derives its unity from the two central characters Tiki and Taki ('singes civilisés'). Earlier lessons depict school and home life on their island, after which they are seen in a rowing boat, proceeding to the land of human beings. Visible to the latter only at night, they attach themselves on arrival to a family with three children. Home life, shopping, Christmas festivities, exploration of premises, birthday celebrations, school life, skating on ice, and a visit to the cinema are the main themes. Finally the monkeys' mothers arrive and take their children back to the island with one member of the family as a guest.

The basis of vocabulary selection is not stated. The end-vocabulary of Part I contains approximately 720 items, and that of Part II about 900. As some two-fifths of the items are common to both lists, the overall intake is estimated at 1,100 to 1,200 words. New words are introduced in both books at a high rate.

For a primary school reader the range of grammatical mechanisms used is wide, and includes examples of the agreement of the past participle with reflexive verbs. Verbs, both regular and irregular, are tabulated functionally at the end of the lesson in which they first appear. The tenses used and their order of introduction are as follows: present, perfect, imperfect, future, conditional. A few examples of the present subjunctive are also found in Part II. Simple sentences are used exclusively in the first nine lessons of Part I. From that point they are accompanied by a limited number of complex sentences for the remainder of the course. Part II also contains a number of participial constructions and phrases used in apposition. Length of sentence increases markedly in Part II.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text is printed in fairly large type on thin paper. The end-vocabulary is small but clear. There are approximately 50 words in each column. Whilst most of the lessons are in narrative form, occasional use is made of the dramatic form of presentation. Lessons increase progressively in length from nine lines at the beginning of Part I to an estimated thirty lines at the end of Part II. French only is used in the text and the grammatical tabulations. Conversational forms are well represented, being found in all but a few of the lessons. In general English punctuation is used, though a dash is used within the line to show a change of speaker.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Pictures, usually representing scenes and occupying half the page or less, appear on most pages and in various positions on the page. They are all in black and white. The diminutive stature of the monkeys forms an effective contrast with the human beings and objects around them.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. There are no exercises or questions. At the end of certain lessons the pattern of inflexion of a verb tense is worked out in complete and varying sentences.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The subject matter of "Tiki et Taki" appears well suited to the interests of primary school children. The story is full of action on the part of the two 'singes civilés', who reveal all the characteristics - impish and otherwise - of normal juniors. Imagination is used by the author to view human beings from a non-human angle, and the amusement value of the drawings heightens the interest.

    The range of vocabulary and construction is likely to prove too wide for primary school children to master actively. The terms used, however, belong essentially to the daily lives of children, and the teaching of comprehension is unlikely to present much difficulty. Though in general authentic, the French is occasionally incorrect, e.g. the use of 'chambre' on pages 42 and 43 of Part II. Of the typographical errors the outstanding case is on page 41 of Part I, where there are three within the space of three lines.

    If "Tiki et Taki" is intended to serve the purpose of a supplementary reader, the provision of verb tabulations is to be regretted. There are certain features, however, which suggest that it might be intended for use as a main course, e.g. the employment of the word 'lesson' instead of 'chapter', the appearance of tabulated grammar, the variety of everyday themes, and the gradual introduction of the tenses. If this is the case, it will become necessary for the teacher to provide further exercises designed to re-employ the language used. Without such exercises, though the children may understand the French without difficulty, the pace is likely to be too quick for them to assimilate it.

KYNASTON-SNELL, H. F.

Lectures Françaises: Vol. 1

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

	£	s.	d.
a) Pupils' reader (pp. 110), containing texts, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises:		7	6
b) Tape 1 reel (5" at $3\frac{3}{4}$ i.p.s.):	5	5	0
Total cost	5	12	6

Pergamon Press, Headington Hill Hall, Oxford and 4/5 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1. 1964. Soft cover: 5" x $7\frac{3}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. In the Preface the author states that 'this reader is designed for use during the second half of the first year'. It is intended for secondary school pupils. The material is completely original and is not a translation from English. The cultural setting centres on Britain, France, West Africa and the United States. The lives of a brother and sister living in each country are carefully compared. The pictures accompanying the text are often used to illustrate the cultural background. Volumes 2, 3 and 4 are now in preparation for publication.

3. CONTENT. There is no story as such to this reader: each chapter deals with particular aspects of life of eight brothers and sisters - all eleven years old - living in England, France, Cameroon and the United States. Typical of the comparison between their different ways of life is Chapter 3 - "Les Vêtements" - in which the children's clothes are compared: heavy clothes for the cold winters of London and New York, light clothes for Cameroon, etc. Sometimes an individual chapter is devoted to the activities of one of the pairs of children. E.g. Chapter 12 - "Les Enfants Wari" - deals with a typical day in the life of these Cameroon children. Another (Chapter 19 - "Les Passe-temps") describes, in short headlined paragraphs, the hobbies of the children.

A note in the Preface says 'the vocabulary throughout is "modern", for the child of today lives in a world of television, nylon, football and frogmen'. The end-vocabulary lists between 900 and 1,000 words - these arise directly from the individual situations of each chapter; although the commonest recur, there are many uncommon words included. Vocabulary is often given within the text in the form of annotated illustrations. The early chapters contain only simple, common words and expressions.

The grammar range is consistent with a reader for the first year; the only verb-tense used is the present; future ideas being expressed throughout with aller + infinitive. However, there are one or two examples of other tenses (e.g. 'ai laissé', p. 25; 'a ouvert', p. 28). 'There are many examples of the singular and plural of verbs and adjectives, which will illustrate the work done with whatever grammar text is in use.' Irregular and reflexive verbs are introduced freely, likewise direct and indirect object pronouns; 'y' and 'en' and demonstrative pronouns ('celui' etc.) occur occasionally. Sentence structure is kept simple at the beginning but later complex sentences are common and include relative clauses (often with use of the oblique form of the relative pronoun) and temporal clauses.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text of 'Lectures Françaises' is set in very clear medium-sized type on high quality mid-weight paper. The exercises are set in somewhat smaller type and heavy type is used for the French words in the end-vocabulary. The layout is in English style (likewise the punctuation) for narrative with occasional dialogue; all new speakers begin a new line and are introduced with the usual inverted commas. The proportion of conversational forms is relatively low. French is used for the text and exercises, though two English translations occur on page 17.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Black-and-white detailed drawings accompany the text. These sometimes illustrate people and objects from the text, though more often they are general illustrations for the purpose of vocabulary teaching; to achieve this some have numbers overprinted with a key at the bottom - others have arrows pointing to various parts of the pictures with key words indicated. There are no pictures to illustrate action from the text, except in a very general sense. A map of the world is included as a frontispiece.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Exercises are set out under chapter headings at the end of the text. Each chapter has three exercises: a) ten questions about the text in comprehension form; b) ten more general questions, often about the reader himself; c) grammar exercise comprising sometimes sentences for completion or words and phrases to be put into the plural, etc. This is the general pattern for the exercises, though sometimes a grammatical exercise replaces (b).

9. AUDIO AIDS. A five inch standard tape recording of all the passages in the reader is available. The passages are read by Jean-Michel and Anne Cublier. The tape runs for sixty minutes at $3\frac{3}{4}$ i.p.s.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. 'Lectures Françaises' is constructed on a rather unusual basis. It depicts the daily life of eleven-year-old children living in four widely separated countries. Being concerned with actuality it is not a reader in the ordinary sense.

The small print and wide vocabulary suggest the secondary stage for which the book was written. There is, however, not a great deal of text, as illustrations are plentiful and more than half the pages are taken up by questions, exercises and vocabulary. Other considerations aside, the total bulk would not be excessive for fourth-year juniors.

Real advantages accrue from the mirror of life in different countries. The preponderance of description about daily habits, however, would be more appropriate in a main course with a grammatical progression. Exercises are quite well planned. The clear-cut division between questions on the text and general or personal questions has much to recommend it. Pictures are of varying types and quality.

LAFITTE, Lucette

Le Cirque Zanzibar

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 63), containing text, illustrations, exercises, verb-list, end-vocabulary, pronunciation drills:

	s.	d.
	3	0
Total cost	3	0

Cambridge University Press, Bentley House, 200 Euston Road, London, N.W.1. 1960. Soft cover: 5" x 7¼".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Le Cirque Zanzibar" has been written for those pupils studying French in the first year at secondary schools. The textual materials and French are original. The cultural setting is modern France but there is little to indicate that the story could not have taken place elsewhere. Illustrations reflect the setting of the story.

3. CONTENT. This is a continuous story divided into eleven short chapters. Tic and Toc are clowns and brothers in the Cirque Zanzibar; Bobet, a colleague, is in charge of the elephants Rita and Tibo. One day the circus moves to a new town. The townspeople are horrified that their drinking water has turned yellow. The local mayor and gendarme discover that the contamination is caused by Bobet washing his elephants in the river. Bobet is arrested, and Tic and Toc are to look after the elephants; these, however, refuse to eat. After a few days Tic and Toc go to plead with the mayor and gendarme who eventually have pity and release Bobet.

   Nearly six hundred words are listed in the end-vocabulary. They cover quite a wide range, including many words connected with the circus. Of these one may cite as examples: se maquiller, piste (= circus ring), gradin. However, the greater part of the vocabulary consists of commonly used words and these are repeated often through the text.

   The grammatical range is restricted in this reader to make it suitable for use in the first year of French. The narrative tense throughout is the present and object pronouns are avoided. Sentence structure is on the whole very simple and well within the pupils' range.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Le Cirque Zanzibar" is set in fairly large type on midweight paper. The layout is in keeping with normal English practice for narrative with conversation, and punctuation is in the English style. The proportion of conversational forms is relatively large. French is used throughout the book.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are many black-and-white drawings scattered through the text. These serve two functions: to introduce the characters as they appear and to illustrate various scenes from the story. Enough detail is provided for discussion.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Ten pages of exercises are provided following the text. These are divided under chapter headings and are each in two parts - 'questions' and 'exercises'. The questions are of the comprehension type and relate mainly to the text, though some are addressed directly to the pupil. The 'exercises' are usually on grammatical points. Dictation is also provided for. A list of -er verbs and reflexive verbs follows the exercises. At the end of the book there are six pages of pronunciation drills. These are divided under the vowels and certain difficult consonant

sounds. Under the phonetic symbol of each vowel or consonant sound there is a list of words containing that sound and two or three sentences.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Le Cirque Zanzibar" provides the eleven-year-old pupil with an interesting and rather unusual plot. Certain improbabilities such as the effect of washing elephants in a river, do not detract from the enjoyment offered by this reader. There is continuous action and a due regard for the need to distribute some conversational French through the predominantly narrative text. Certain episodes could be dramatised and acted.

There is originality in some of the exercises offered, e.g. children are required to draw a coloured picture to correspond with five lines of description in French. Others of an exclusively grammatical type are more appropriate in a main course. Exercises of the 'Trouvez la question' type are only satisfactory when a specific answer (as opposed to a bald statement) is given and the one corresponding question has to be found. Illustrations are amusing and attractive.

As far as juniors are concerned though the theme is suitable the language is probably too difficult. The chief difficulty does not appear to arise from the large number of words (many of which are concrete and easily explained) or the construction of sentences. It is rather in the choice of words. Too many are outside the category of what can be called frequent and necessary for conversational purposes. Some of them, like 'épouvantable', 'prestidigitateur' and 'représentation' require an effort of catenising and memorising equal to that involved in learning a short sentence.

LAFITTE, Lucette

La Ferme du Père Mathieu

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 64), containing texts, word-lists, questions and exercises, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	6
Total cost	2	6

Cambridge University Press, 200 Euston Road, London N.W.1.
1958. Soft cover: 5" x $7\frac{1}{4}$".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. There is no Preface to this reader stating the author's intentions. It is clear, however, that the book is intended for first-year secondary school pupils. The story is original and the authoress is assumed to be a native speaker of French. The episodes are set on the small farm of Père Mathieu and the illustrations reflect this background. There is nothing in either the text or the illustrations that make this a uniquely French setting.

3. CONTENT. "La Ferme du Père Mathieu" is divided into five sections: winter, spring, summer, autumn and winter. Each of the first four has two short stories about various animals on the farm. Typical of these, for example, is an account of the ducks' plight on discovering their pond frozen one winter morning and how Père Mathieu breaks the ice for them. One duck, a little more adventurous than the others, manages to get his beak stuck between two stones. However, he is soon rescued by the others. Another story tells how the goat chews cousin Irma's floral hat while she is having a nap in the late summer sun. Many of the stories are told from the viewpoint of the animals themselves.

The end-vocabulary lists some 500 words; most of these are common and well within the range of Level One of Français Fondamental. However, there is a large number of farm-yard words which recur (often only once) (e.g. glousser, picorer, grains de mais, vers etc.). Occasionally there are other infrequent words (e.g. ausculter, basculer). There are seven pages headed 'Listes de Mots' which list many words and phrases chapter by chapter. From these lists it may be seen that vocabulary introduction is not gradual - some chapters having quite a large proportion of new words.

Grammatical material has been restricted, but there is no statement about the basis of this restriction. The narrative tense throughout is the present. Direct and indirect object pronouns, relative pronouns (including the oblique case) and irregular and reflexive verbs are used. Sentences are often of the complex category, though usually straightforward. Most of the subordinate clauses are of the relative type.

5. PRESENTATION. "La Ferme du Père Mathieu" is set in large type on rather thin paper. The layout of the text is as for narrative with quite a large proportion of conversational forms. The entire book is in French. Each major section is preceded by a short introduction set in italic type.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Illustrations are large (mostly full-page), black-and-white sketches. Each contains quite a large amount of background detail which might be suitable for discussion. The nine illustrations are related to the text itself in that they depict the main incidents, showing the characters in action.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. There are ten pages of exercises following the text. These are arranged according to chapter and are divided into two types: 'Questions' and 'Exercises'. The questions are of the comprehension type and relate to the story of the chapter itself. The exercises are various: there is usually a dictation (a paragraph from the text and a composition which may not be related to the story). There are pronunciation exercises (but only for the vowels). Grammar exercises include those of the type where the pupil is required to fill a blank with a correct form of, say, a verb, the infinitive of which is given, and also of the type where the pupil is required to change the tense (present to future, for example) of a passage.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "La Ferme du Père Mathieu" is a reader of the type usually associated with the early secondary stage. It is original in that the class is taken successively through events at the farm during each of the four seasons. There is a descriptive passage of French to herald each new season, but each section contains a continuous narrative.

It follows from the construction of the reader that the events of a given season are virtually independent of what has happened before and will happen later. As a result the book, though quite interesting, has not the attractions of a continuous story.

As indicated under CONTENT above, the vocabulary is fairly wide and unevenly distributed. Words, phrases and occasionally sentences appear indiscriminately in the 'Listes de Mots'. There is also a certain lack of balance about the sentence construction, which appears to stem from the continual use of relative clauses as the main change from simple sentences. Such a procedure may well seem justifiable on mere grounds of simplification but there are also stylistic considerations. This reader, while serving its purpose at the secondary stage, is likely to prove too difficult for juniors with an audio-visual introduction.

The exercises are not very attractive. Questionnaires need to be longer. Dictation passages can always be chosen by the teacher himself. Other exercises connected with pronunciation drill and grammar practice destroy the idea of reading for pleasure. Illustrations, however, are quite good.

LEVY, Harry

Faisons du Théâtre

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 88) containing texts, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	6	0
Total cost	6	0

George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 182 High Holborn, London W. 1.
1964. Soft cover, 5" x 7¼".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Faisons du Théâtre" is subtitled 'Saynètes TAVOR' and has been designed with two aims in mind: to revise vocabulary and structures presented in the TAVOR A-V Course and to provide a series of situations using the material of the course but in a different context. Of course, the usefulness of this book is not restricted to those who have followed the TAVOR method. Eight plays revise the 40 TAVOR lessons systematically. There is a Foreword by V. Kamenev, author of TAVOR. The cultural setting is modern France and the situations vary widely. Illustrations are provided in keeping with the background of the text itself. This collection of plays is intended for first-year pupils in the secondary school.

3. CONTENT. This reader is divided into eight short plays. Each is self-contained and has no connection with the others, either from the point of view of story content or of characters. There are various amusing plays, typically: No. 3. 'Un Simple Malentendu' which tells how an English couple are looking for a hotel: they do not understand French and despite the efforts of three Frenchmen they can scarcely make themselves understood: a policeman arrives, and after a series of misunderstandings the three Frenchmen are taken to the police station - the English couple still not having made any progress. The other plays are of a similar type in content.

   Nearly 800 words are included in the end-vocabulary of this reader. These are wide in range and can supplement the vocabulary available in TAVOR. There is a clear attempt at vocabulary control, though most of the new words do arise directly from the situational content. Only a few relatively infrequent words are included: e.g. dépister, cire, fric-frac.

   "Faisons du Théâtre" has a grammatical content designed to follow that of the TAVOR A-V Course. The main tense is the present, though there are examples of the perfect (often with 'être'), the future and the conditional (vous voudriez, p. 73). Sentence structure is graded and towards the end of the book there are occurrences of the relative pronoun (including the oblique case) and the present participle; 'y' and 'en' are included as well as direct and indirect object pronouns.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. This reader is set in medium-sized type on mid-weight paper. The entire text is in dialogue form using the convention of a new scene upon the entry of each new character. Personages are printed in upper-case-type and stage directions are in italics. French is used throughout the texts, except in No. 3, where the English characters speak only English. Punctuation is in the English style. The plays vary in length and average some six or seven pages.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Each play is preceded by a ¼ page black-and-white line drawing illustrating some of the characters of the play either in a general setting, or in some incident during the play itself.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. This collection of playlets is in the first place for children following the TAVOR Audio-Visual French Course, which is used at both secondary and primary levels (mostly the former). It is said to be for other children too, but being unfamiliar with the language range it draws upon, they could not use it as a supplementary reader.

    The appearance of "Faisons du Théâtre" will do good service to the cause of TAVOR. It supplies continuous French, an element lacking in the Audio-Visual Course itself. With the connected French there also comes an element of humour. In schools where the TAVOR Course has been introduced, both teacher and class will have a more definite target from the beginning.

    A good deal of simple, conversational French is re-employed in these playlets. Perhaps the main drawback is that the task of weaving TAVOR expressions into the fabric of playlets and of re-employing the terms in question has caused the action to be suspended at times by what amounts to pure verbiage. This is not a handicap so long as the book is treated solely as a reader, but adaptations are necessary if profitable learning and acting are to take place.

    Material to be used for learning and acting need not have exercises or illustrations. However, the author has wisely taken the precaution of including some pictures in case the collection is used as a class reader.

LOVEMAN, C. E.

Que Fait Jean?

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 32) containing texts, questions and end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	0
Total Cost	2	0

Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., London.
1959 (reprinted 1963). Soft cover: 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Que Fait Jean?" is described as First Year - Book 1 in a series of readers for the secondary stage. The readers are intended to be used concurrently with the Modern Method French Course. Both the stories and the French used are original. The background is neutral, though a few of the illustrations are clearly French.

3. CONTENT. The reader is divided into twelve chapters. Each of these contains an independent episode, though characters themselves are recurrent. The central figure is Jean Morel, a schoolboy who is on the whole a good example. The themes of the successive episodes are as follows: John's teacher falling on the ice; John falling out of a boat; a naughty boy being duly punished; riding donkeys on the sands; a naughty boy's attempt to get John into trouble; a picnic in the fields; some rather vindictive snowballing; an accident at a market booth; John drawing other people; setting off for the sea-side; eating at a restaurant; John being caught on a fishing line.

   There are about 350 words in the end-vocabulary. This is said to correspond with Lessons 7 to 12 of the Modern Method French Course, Book 1. Though the number of words to each chapter appears to be large, they are all familiar words being re-employed. Their distribution through the reader appears to be fairly even.

   The grammatical range also corresponds to the above mentioned part of the Modern Method French Course. The book is restricted to the present tense and some cases of the immediate future. Direct and indirect pronoun objects are avoided up to the last two chapters, when a few simple direct objects appear. Neither possessive adjectives nor possessive pronouns appear to be used. Though there are a few instances of relative clauses, short simple sentences are found throughout.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Que Fait Jean?" is set in clear, medium-sized type on midweight paper. Apart from a few dialogues in dramatic form the narrative form of presentation is used throughout. All the chapters have a conversational element punctuated with inverted commas. French is used throughout except in the bi-lingual end-vocabulary and the team games. (See 7. ACTIVITIES.)

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. These are all in black and white. The method of illustrating the chapters is not consistent. The first two chapters, which print dialogues separately, each contain four square pictures illustrating the action. Chapter three has six pictures of the same type all printed on a separate page. Thereafter a single picture goes with each chapter, at first occupying a whole page and then less. All pictures are naturalistic and show complete situations.

7. ACTIVITIES. Chapters 10 and 12 each contain a team game described in English.

8. EXERCISES. Each chapter is accompanied by half a dozen questions. Most, and sometimes all, of these are on the text. The remainder are personal questions suggested by the language of the text.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. This reader for first year pupils at the secondary stage is undoubtedly simple enough for use in the Junior School. The language of the text has been reduced to the bare essentials needed to convey the meaning. There are few difficulties beyond the learning of vocabulary items, and even these are all concrete and within the child's world. The learning process is assisted by the inclusion of many semi-repetitive forms of expression, e.g. 'L'âne court. Il court vite.' that prove useful in the teaching of French to Junior School children. Despite the overall simplicity of the language the text still provides a recognisable image of reality and adequately conveys the author's occasional humorous touches.

    Apart from certain oddities like 'Les chevaux ont une écurie' and the persistence of 'une plume' as opposed to 'un stylo' in Chapter 3, the French is as authentic as a reader simplified for first-year pupils can be. The process of simplification has left insufficient variety from the short statement expressed in the third person. This could be explained as an unfortunate by-product of the plan to introduce interesting supplementary reading material in the first year. It follows that the teacher who attaches importance to variety of pattern in the sequence of sentences should postpone supplementary reading till after the first year. It should also be borne in mind that this series supplements one particular course (see GENERAL DESCRIPTION above).

    In further reprints of this reader a consistent approach to the method of illustration and the presentation of conversational form is needed. Also the questionnaires should be lengthened if they are to form a real comprehension test as opposed to a mere device for finding out whether children have read the chapter.

LOVEMAN, C.E.

Louis en Vacances

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 32), containing texts, questions and end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	2	0
Total cost	2	0

Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., London.
1959 (reprinted 1962). Soft cover: 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Louis en Vacances" is described as First Year - Book 2 in a series of readers for the secondary stage. As in the case of "Que Fait Jean?" by the same author, this reader is intended to be used with the Modern Method French Course. The stories and French expression are original. Very little in the stories or illustrations is characteristically French.

3. CONTENT. There are twelve numbered chapters. Though Louis is the main character in all of them, they are quite self-contained. Each is constructed around some unusual happening. The themes are as follows: apt remarks by a talking parrot; a scout's tent on fire; apple-gathering in an orchard; loss and recovery of a watch; a child getting one leg stuck in a tree; father and son kept waiting by mother and daughters; a scuffle ending with a boy falling into a drinking trough; rude remarks made during the search for a scout's hat; life-saving by children and a dog; arrival and departure of a rather unusual uncle.

The end-vocabulary contains about 380 words. This is stated to correspond with Lessons 13 to 20 of Modern Method French Course, Book 1. As with "Que Fait Jean?", the terms used are for the most part concrete and within the experience of young children. Though the vocabulary intake is rather large, the words are all useful.

The grammatical range corresponds to the above-mentioned section of the Modern Method French Course, Book 1. Tenses are still confined to the present and the immediate future. Pronoun objects are used rather infrequently. The possessive adjective is freely used but not the pronoun. Whilst the simple sentence still predominates, some use is made of compound and complex sentences. Subordinate clauses are restricted to the simpler forms of adjectival and adverbial clauses. With these syntactical additions the length of some sentences is considerably greater than what is found in "Que Fait Jean?".

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Louis en Vacances" is set in clear medium-sized type on midweight paper. With the exception of Chapter II which is in dramatic form the narrative form of presentation is used throughout the text. Conversation is punctuated in the English fashion. The proportion of conversational French varies from one chapter to another, but is always adequate. French only is used except in the end-vocabulary.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. The pictures are in black and white. There is one picture, which normally occupies over half a page, to each episode. In addition several small pictures appear on other pages and the front cover. All pictures are naturalistic and depict complete situations.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Each chapter is accompanied by six questions, some of which are on the text and others personal.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The greater range of vocabulary and sentence structure available to him has enabled the author to improve upon the general construction of the text of "Que Fait Jean?". His simplified French now shows more variety in the type and length of sentences. This is an interesting collection of stories and though written and printed for Secondary School pupils, can be safely recommended for use at the top of the Primary School. It is necessary to bear in mind that this reader supplements the Modern Method French Course. Teachers using another French course but still wishing to introduce "Louis en Vacances" as a supplementary reader should make a note of all new features and give special practice in them. Comments on questionnaires and illustrations are as for "Que Fait Jean?".

    For "Louis en Vacances" to be wholly in tune with the primary approach to French, it would probably be necessary to increase the size of the lettering and make a children's book out of it. The fact that the book is already used at this level in its present form is an indication of the general suitability of its material. It is also a reflection on the scarcity of suitable reading material published specially for British Primary Schools.

MAUGER, G.

Contes et Récits

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 79), containing text, footnotes, illustrations and questionnaires:

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Paper cover	3	3	Limp linson	4	0
Total cost	3	3	Total cost	4	0

Hachette, London and 79 Bd. Saint-Germain, Paris.
1962. Soft cover: 4½" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. Like "Aladin et la Lampe Merveilleuse" and "Le Roman de Renard", this reader belongs to the series entitled "Illustrated Basic French Readers", which is distributed exclusively in the United Kingdom by the above-mentioned publisher. It is catalogued as being suitable for the lower secondary stage. Some of the stories are adapted from International Folklore and French Literature. The cultural background attached to a collection of medieval, modern and fairy tales is of necessity varied.

3. CONTENT. Fourteen main stories are listed in the table of contents. Several of these such as "Ali Baba", "Cendrillon" and "Renard dans le Puits" will be familiar to the pupils. The others are of very different types. Thus "L'Enfant de Neige" is a simple story with a fairy element. "Dans Mon Sac" contains a religious theme which is not totally absent from one or two other stories. Both the Almighty and the Devil have speaking parts in this story, and an old soldier kidnaps St. Peter in order to assure himself a safe entry into Paradise. "L'Affairs de l'Avion 524" is one of two detective stories. It has ten scenes arranged in dramatic form. In addition to these major items, a considerable number of anecdotes, jokes and problems are distributed through the book. Many of these are taken from other publications named.

A key to the vocabulary range is found in the introductory statement that these stories "permettrent une assimilation plus rapide des éléments de vocabulaire et de grammaire qui aurent été étudiés soit dans le tome I de 'Langue et Civilisation Françaises', soit dans 'Le Français Elementaire', soit enfin dans 'Le Français Accéléré'." Part I of "Contes et Récits" is based on Lessons 1 to 25 of 'Langue et Civilisation Françaises' which contains about 550 words. Part 2 corresponds to the vocabulary taught by Lesson 49 of the same work, and draws on some 1,100 words. All terms which are not to be found in the list of 'Le Français Fondamental' are explained in French in footnotes. The absence of vocabularies from this book and others in the series is consistent with a direct method approach.

The grammar of "Contes et Récits" Parts 1 and 2 shows a general correspondence with the two levels described in the previous paragraph. Part 1 is restricted to the present, future and perfect tenses, the latter for conversational forms only. Part 2, while introducing the imperfect and the conditional tenses, still retains the present as the main narrative tense for past events. Part 2 also adds other grammatical items such as degrees of comparison, possessive pronouns, emphatic pronouns and a more general use of adverbs. On the syntactical plane the book has a general air of simplicity. Part 1 contains a small proportion of temporal clauses, while Part 2 has subordinate clauses of all three types.

. NOTES FOR TEACHERS. The full title "Contes et Récits, Histoires Policières", is followed by the underlined words "Pour les exercices de lecture et de conversation".

5. PRESENTATION. "Contes et Récits" is set in clear, small-sized type on rather thin paper. Text and notes are all in French. The punctuation of conversational forms, of which there is a high proportion, illustrates the correct French practice. This involves the opening of inverted commas for the first speaker, and the use of a horizontal dash close to the beginning of the line for each subsequent change of speaker.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. The pictures are in black and white, and portray whole situations. Apart from one full-page illustration, they occupy between a third and a half of a page. Most of the stories have one accompanying picture, but "Ali Baba", which runs to thirteen pages, has four.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. There is a list of questions under the title "Conversations" at the end of each main story.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. M. Mauger has assembled an interesting and varied collection of reading material for the lower secondary stage. In general the work of adaptation and simplification has been very skilfully carried out. One of the main attractions is the alternation of full-length stories with anecdotes, jokes etc. The author leaves no doubt that these stories are intended to be used as a basis for conversation.

    Despite the general authenticity of the French it is open to question whether the interests of English children are served by the continued use of the present tense to narrate past events even after the imperfect tense has been introduced. Thus the first two paragraphs on page 33 begin with the following statements which are closely connected with one another - "Dans une ville du Nord de l'Europe autrefois, vivait un riche seigneur, qui aimait surtout les beaux habits" .... "Un jour, deux étrangers viennent frapper à la porte du palais".

    The Junior School teacher should note that this story is likely to offer the children a little more difficulty than "Aladin et la Lampe Merveilleuse". Compared with "Le Roman de Renard" it is syntactically simpler, but may prove harder owing to the narrative form of presentation. Though this reader was not written for the junior stage, enterprising teachers with top classes may wish to use Part 1 and a selection of the anecdotes.

    The illustrations are helpful and the questions supplied form a convenient basis for conversation.

POOR ORIGINAL COPY - BEST
AVAILABLE AT TIME FILMED

MICKELSON, L.

Action Dans la Salle de Classe

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' mixed reader (pp. 40), containing foreword, text and illustrations:

	s.	d.
	8	0
Total cost	8	0

Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge.
Mass., U.S.A. 1960. Soft cover: 8½" x 11".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This book, which bears the sub-title Récitations Elémentaires, is for use in American Elementary Schools and Junior High Schools. The age of the pupils is not stated. The purpose is to 'meet the need for a handy collection of skits and songs for speaking, singing and doing'. Most of the items contain well-known stories, some of which will be familiar to the children. The authoress is Headmistress of Outdoor Woodford Hall, Hollywood, Florida, and the illustrations are by B. L. Biffi. Though some of the songs and fables reflect French cultural background, the plays and illustrations reveal little that is characteristically French.

3. CONTENT. The various items are grouped under four main headings in the table of contents. There are three one-act plays, four short stories (including some proverbs), two fables by La Fontaine, and twelve songs. The first two plays are French renderings of 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The third, which is not strictly speaking a fairy story, is entitled 'The King Who Was Always Cold'. The 'Petits Récits' include items as different as a salutation to the American flag, the Lord's Prayer, a set of proverbs, a counting rhyme, and some anecdotes. La Fontaine is represented by "La Cigale et la Fourmi" and "Le Corbeau et le Renard", both in unsimplified form. The songs are the old favourites used in connection with the teaching of French in Britain and America.

No statement is made about the selection of vocabulary or the frequency with which new words are introduced. Nor is there any indication of the grammatical or structural intake. There is no end vocabulary. The level of language as a whole varies greatly between the extreme simplicity of counting rhymes and the complicated and sometimes archaic forms of La Fontaine's poetry. Between these two extremes is the language of the plays and anecdotes, for which present past and future tenses are all indispensable.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. It is pointed out in the foreword that 'most of the Chansons may be sung actively'. All but one were chosen 'because they invite the singers to act them out'.

5. PRESENTATION. 'Action dans la Salle de Classe', is printed on fairly stout paper. Though the print is equal to the average size found in other readers, it is small in relation to the total dimensions of the book. English is used extensively to assist with the comprehension of plays and proverbs. Two of the three plays and the proverbs have line by line translation, while the third play has directions only in English. In addition to the text and melody of the songs, an illustration is provided where possible. In general, the French of the copy received is accurately printed, though the song 'Il était une bergère' has the wrong form of the indefinite article (i.e. 'un' for 'une') in the title, the music and the text. Punctuation used for stories told in the narrative form is similar to the French kind, the only difference being that two short dashes instead of one long dash are used to show a change of speaker. The text of all songs is printed with spaced lettering.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Apart from the pictures of the American and French flags, illustrations usually occupy a whole page. The music of songs, however, is sometimes found on the illustration page. There are fourteen of these pictures, each in black and white and each depicting a scene from the text on the opposite page.

7. ACTIVITIES. Reference has already been made to the twelve songs, complete with illustration (where possible), text and melody. There are no games.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The authoress may be considered to have achieved her aim to meet the need for a handy collection of skits and songs. Simple songs with attractive melodies do not age, and what may be described as the 'classics' continue to be welcomed by teachers and pupils. Though young children themselves do not require a ready-made text for acting purposes, the one-act plays enable the teacher whose French is unsure to introduce dramatic activities. The provision of line by line translation, though to some extent excusable in a book intended for use by the teacher only, is a regrettable feature in a reader which may be used in class.

Some of the contents, such as the unsimplified fables of La Fontaine and the Prière Doninicale, are too hard for juniors. They remind us that this reader, like several others, is also intended for use in Junior High Schools. A more serious shortcoming is the clear lack of authenticity in the French used for the short stories, e.g. on page 23 'Je courrai de vous chercher plus de sauce', and 'Madame la mère d'un enfant qui avait été très sage pendant un grand dîner, si sage que, vers la fin du repas, sa mère lui demende ....' Also in a book of such generous dimensions, larger print and more inspiring illustrations could have appeared. A song like "Savez vous planter les choux?" has amusement value as a classroom activity, but gains nothing from an artist's impression.

The authoress of "Action dans la Salle de Classe" has provided within the covers of one book a variety of items intended to brighten the approach to French. As far as juniors are concerned the most valuable of these appears to be the collection of songs.

POOR ORIGINAL COPY - BEST
AVAILABLE AT TIME FILMED

POTTS, E.

Histoires Drôles

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 30), containing texts, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises:

	s.	d.
	2	3
Total cost	2	3

J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 10/13 Bedford Street, London, W.C.2.
1956 (last reprinted 1962). Soft cover: 4¾" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Histoires Drôles" is similar to its companion volume "Histoires Gaies". This reader is a collection of short stories intended for pupils in their first year at secondary school 'who have done a term or a term and a half of French'. Most of the stories are original although one bears the postscript 'By kind permission of Les Presses D'Ile de France'. The cultural setting is modern, though there is little to show the differences between French and British life. The aim of this book is to give reading practice and help establish facility of speech.

3. CONTENT. "Histoires Drôles" is divided into twenty-one unnumbered different short stories; these vary in length from one third of a page at the beginning to well over the page towards the end. A typical story is entitled 'Le Petit Gourmand'; grandmother goes out shopping and brings back a bag of sweets which she gives to Gérard, her grandson. Sometime later she discovers him eating sweets one after another; she scolds him for forgetting his sister. He protests that he has not forgotten his sister: 'Voilà pourquoi je mange mes bonbons!' One story, 'Dans le Restaurant', takes the form of a playlet.

The vocabulary is restricted to some 300 words and there appears to have been some attention paid to its controlled introduction. Words do, however, arise from the situation of the story itself for the most part. Most of the words are very common, though there are one or two (as 'croûte', 'gages') which are less common. The author states that 'the vocabulary is practical, consisting of words useful to beginners'.

The grammatical range is similar to that of "Histoires Gaies" and is again restricted for the use of almost complete beginners. There is evidence of the grading of sentence structures, though specific points of grammar are not treated as such. The narrative tense is the present; little use is made of other tenses except in one or two isolated instances (e.g. 'a acheté', p. 10). Oblique cases of the relative do occur infrequently, though direct and indirect object pronouns have been carefully avoided.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. Set in rather small type on mid-weight paper "Histoires Drôles" is uniform with the previous reader. Once again exercises are set in small print. For the most part dialogue is included within the paragraphs of narrative and is always within inverted commas, although often a dash occurs also to separate the speakers.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. The only illustration is the black-and-white whole page frontispiece illustrating Suzanne and her grandfather at the zoo - the subject of the first story.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. These follow each story and take the form of ten to twenty comprehension questions on the text to be answered in French. A note in the Preface suggests that after the first few lessons the books should be closed when these questions are asked. Some exercises also include skeleton outlines for compositions: these are derived from the subject matter of the particular story in question.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. This collection of short stories has been written for secondary school pupils who have been learning French for a term or a term and a half. Though this book is by no means the only one making the attempt, it is questionable whether supplementary reading should be introduced at such an early stage. The chief danger is always that unless it is intended to go with a particular main course, the reader may draw upon an extensive and totally different vocabulary from what happens to be in the main course of a given class. This would create an intolerable vocabulary burden. The author of "Histoires Drôles", no doubt alive to this danger, has solved the problem by relying on the shortest possible unit, namely the extended anecdote. By introducing the anecdotes at whatever intervals he wishes the teacher can control the total intake of vocabulary.

The stories are amusing and told in short sentences for the most part. They would be within the capacity of juniors in their second or their third year of French. The dramatised piece on p. 6 is a happy choice that could have been made more often. It is unfortunate that the questionnaires appear on the same page as the stories instead of in a separate section at the end of the book. This arrangement, though apparently helpful, often leads to the misuse of the questionnaires. Also the dearth of pictures and the presence of certain advanced exercises (e.g. outlines for composition) would go against the possible use of this reader in the Junior School.

POTTS, E.

Histoires Gaies

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 30), containing texts, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises:

	s.	d.
	2	3
Total cost	2	3

J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 10/13 Bedford Street, London, W.C.2.
1956 (Reprinted 1962). Soft cover: $4\frac{3}{4}$" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Histoires Gaies" is a collection of stories written for first-year secondary school pupils who have done a term or a term and a half of French. The author says in the Preface that these stories are 'to give' practice in rapid reading and to encourage readiness of speech. Most of the material is original both in story and language, but the last two stories have been adapted from books published in English: "The Magic Word" by Charlotte Zolotov (Wonder Books Inc., New York 1952) and "It's a Secret" by Benjamin Brewster (Wonder Books Inc., New York 1950). The cultural setting is modern, but there is very little that is typically French in any of the stories.

3. CONTENT. This reader is divided into twenty-one unnumbered stories which are not linked to each other. They vary in length from one third of a page at the beginning of the book to over a page at the end. Each story aims at maintaining the reader's interest by leading up to a final climax or twist. Typical of such episodes is "Un Bon Conseil!" - two Frenchmen holidaying in Germany save from drowning the wife of a rich sausage manufacturer; when they refuse to accept a reward he gives them this piece of advice: "Ne mangez jamais de saucisses!" The stories are of general interest and do not necessarily concern children.

The author has the following note in the Preface about the vocabulary of this reader: 'The vocabulary is practical, consisting of words which are useful to beginners; many of the words resemble their English counterparts so closely as to need no explanation'. The end-vocabulary shows that the number of words has been restricted to some three hundred and there is some evidence that thought has been given to the controlled introduction of new words.

Grammatical range has been restricted in this reader to make it suitable for near beginners. With a few exceptions (e.g. 'est sorti' on p. 10) the present tense is used throughout. Possessive and demonstrative adjectives occur (though the latter are rare) as well as relative pronouns in the oblique case, but direct and indirect object pronouns have been carefuly avoided. It is clear that attention has been paid to some progressio in the complexity of language, but the author states in the Preface that the stories 'were not written to teach specific points of grammar'.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. There are no notes for the teacher as such, but the author suggests in the Preface that 'after the first few stories, book should be closed when the questions are asked, so that from the start the pupils may rely on aural rather than visual comprehension'. A few siple topics for composition are suggested.

5. PRESENTATION. "Histoires Gaies" is set in rather small type on mid-weight paper; the type used for the exercises is even smaller. Texts are set out as for narrative; dialogue is mixed within a paragraph of narrative and introduced with inverted commas sometimes with, sometimes without the addition of a dash. It seems that the dash has been used to indicate change of speaker, but, for example, page 19, line 8 does not have the dash, whereas line 11 does, etc. French is used throughout except in the Preface and end-vocabulary.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. The only picture in this reader is a full-page black-and-white frontispiece illustrating a general view of a circus ring - the background to one of the stories.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Exercises are provided after each story. These consist of ten to twenty questions on the story. Sometimes there is the addition of a skeleton composition which the pupil is required to enlarge upon; this may take the form of questions to prompt the pupil.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. These short stories or anecdotes are of the same type and for the same stage as the "Histoires Drôles" by the same author. There is, however, no example of the successful dramatic form used in the other collection. Apart from this, "Histoires Gaies" has all the features that have been described in the previous evaluation.

PRATT, Sydney, A. M.

Le Petit Kofi

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 74), containing text, illustrations, chapter-by-chapter word-lists, exercises, lists of verbs, end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	3	6
Total cost	3	6

Cambridge University Press: 1961 - reprinted 1963.
Soft cover; 5" x 7¼".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Le Petit Kofi" is a reader for use in the earliest stages of a first year of French. The material is similar to that used in 'La Vie de Kofi' (Book 1) and the present reader can be used as an introduction to the more difficult book. The cultural background of the reader is West Africa. Many details are included in both text and illustrations of the way of life of a village family in this setting.

3. CONTENT. The reader is not a continuous story - each of the seventeen chapters being more or less self-contained. Half the passages are concerned with the daily life of Kofi, his parents and grandparents who live together in their village house. Kofi has two brothers and two sisters. The first few chapters are taken up with details of the members of the family; there follows a chapter on the house and one on Kofi's school. Various other chapters describe Kofi's daily life; there are pages on food and amusements. One or two incidents are included: a friend of Kofi's steals a bicycle and crashes into a pile of buckets; one of Kofi's brothers is bitten by a snake and is very ill but recovers. Many of the chapters are told by Kofi himself in the first person.

The vocabulary range of the reader is extensive and some 650 words are included in the end-vocabulary. These include a large number of 'local' words - names of African plants and foods, local customs etc. These, however, are often explained in French in the text as they occur. The lists of words which follow the texts are grouped according to the chapter; they include new and difficult words as well as complete phrases which may be idiomatic or simply contain a difficult form. No mention is made by the author of any control of the introduction of new vocabulary.

The grammatical range of "Le Petit Kofi" is restricted to make it suitable for the earliest stages of first year work. Direct and indirect object pronouns have been avoided, although reflexive verbs are freely included on the grounds that they are 'essential to the description of daily routine'. 'Common irregular verbs are introduced gradually' and there seems to have been some attempt to grade the difficulty of sentence patterns.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. There are no specific Notes for the Teacher. However, the author does mention in the Preface that "Le Petit Kofi" will be found useful 'as reading material for private study since translation or comprehension difficulties should not arise.'

5. PRESENTATION. The text is printed in large type on quite thin paper; there is 1½ line spacing. Chapters do not necessarily begin a new page. The text is set out normally for narrative and any conversation is very infrequent. French is used throughout the text and punctuation is in the English style. A printing error occurs in 1.9 on page 23 where a full-stop is included where possibly a comma was intended. Chapters average two pages in length.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are twelve black-and-white line drawings accompanying the text. Some of these are large and bold, resembling woodcuts. These illustrations often represent just one character, either as a portrait (as of the members of Kofi's family at the beginning of the book) or in the action of an episode from the text.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Eleven pages of 'Questions et Exercises' follow the text and chapter-vocabularies. These are under individual chapter headings. There are usually five comprehension questions on the text or about the pupil-reader. Various grammar drills or sometimes composition exercises follow the 'Questions'. Often there are exercises containing blanks to be filled with the correct form of verb or adjective. Two pages list examples of the present tense of the three regular conjugations, 'avoir', 'être' and 'aller', with twenty-seven irregular verbs used in the text.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Le Petit Kofi" is a story in seventeen chapters. These are well arranged and integrated, a relatively rare achievement when everyday life forms the subject of most of them. The fact that it is everyday life in Africa and that there is an admixture of accidental happenings enables this reader to escape certain criticisms that have been made of others. Though the chief character is eleven years old, it is not stated categorically that the book is for the secondary stage. The predominance of simple actions and the extensive use of the first person singular may bring it within the compass of juniors. On the other hand sentence structure is at times none too simple, and the names of articles of everyday use in Africa are not easy to teach to English juniors.

    This reader is clearly most suitable for pupils being educated in the countries whose background is reflected, namely Ghana, Guinea, Togo and Dahomey. Children studying French in Britain need a background that is preferably French or neutral or at least familiar. Anything else, however exotic it may seem, creates extra teaching problems and the danger of another culture being mistaken for the French.

    Whereas most of the exercises make a useful contribution towards fluency and accuracy in speech, a few which ask for grammatical forms to be supplied in isolation should be avoided. Illustrations appear to be suitable for the children who are most likely to benefit from this reader. (See preceding paragraph.)

PURVIS, H. and WHITE, J.E.

Berthe aux Grands Pieds

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 48), containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises:

	s.	d.
	2	9
Total cost	2	9

Oxford University Press: 1957.
Soft cover: 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. "Berthe aux Grands Pieds" has been adapted and simplified from the medieval minstrel poem. The authors do not state the age of pupils for whom the reader is intended nor whether this is a first reader; it may be concluded, however, that "Berthe" is aimed at first year secondary school pupils. The story is set in medieval France and the actions and emotions of the characters are typical of the period (late 8th century). The illustrations are in keeping with the cultural setting of the text.

3. CONTENT. The continuous story as we have it here is divided into fifteen chapters and follows carefully the text of the original minstrel song. Pépin le Bref, King of France, is without an heir and sends to Hungary to ask the hand of Berthe, daughter of King Flore and Queen Blanchefleur. Flore consents and Berthe comes to Paris accompanied by her servant Margiste, Aliste (daughter of Margiste) and Tybert (cousin of Aliste). The marriage takes place, but Margiste is already plotting the death of Berthe and her replacement by her daughter Aliste who resembles the sixteen-year-old queen in looks. Margiste contrives that Aliste should take the place of Berthe and that the real queen should be accused of attempting to murder Pépin's bride. Berthe, her real identity unknown, is taken off by three guards and Tybert into the forest to be executed. One of the guards takes pity on her and, despite the threats of Tybert, she is released. Berthe wanders in the forests and eventually comes across Simon, a road-surveyor, and family with whom she stays, not disclosing her real identity. Meanwhile Aliste has two sons and Flore requests that one be sent to Hungary as his heir. When the 'queen' refuses, Blanchefleur comes to Paris to find out why, and discovers that the queen is not Berthe. The whole story comes out and Margiste and Tybert are executed, and Aliste sent to a convent. A search is made for Berthe, but in vain. One day, the king out hunting meets Berthe who discloses her real identity (although she does not recognise him). Later she denies that she is the queen and so Pépin sends for Flore and Blanchefleur who immediately recognise Berthe as their daughter. All return to Paris. Berthe later has a son who becomes the future Charlemagne.

The end-vocabulary of this reader contains some 650 words. The authors make no mention of their method of vocabulary selection, but it is clear that the words arise from the original story itself and that there has been no attempt to control the introduction of new words. Difficult words and phrases are explained in footnotes throughout the text. On the whole the vocabulary is simpler than the accompanying volume "Roland", though there are a few infrequent words included: e.g. trahir, voyer, sanglier.

The grammatical range of "Berthe" is narrower than that of "Roland". The present tense has been used throughout, though one or two unimportant examples of the perfect and future tenses do occur. Direct and indirect object pronouns are used freely as well as the relative pronoun in the nominative and oblique case. For the most part sentences are kept short and simple, though there are many examples of sentences three lines in length. Complex sentences include indirect statement and question and temporal clauses. All grammatical forms are kept modern and conversation is in the normal 20th century style.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. This reader is printed clearly in average-size type on mid-weight paper. Exercises and footnotes are set in type somewhat smaller than that of the main text. The layout is as for narrative interspersed with dialogue; new chapters do not necessarily begin on new pages. Conversation forms a large proportion of the text and this is punctuated in the normal French fashion: i.e. a speech begins with a paragraph and a dash.. If the same speaker continues over into a new paragraph this is introduced by inverted commas. French is used throughout the story text, though the Introduction and exercise instructions are in English.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are thirteen bold wood-cut type illustrations irregularly spaced throughout the text. Each occupies at least $\frac{1}{4}$ page and two take up one whole page. They depict an episode from the text. The style of the illustrations is medieval in keeping with the story. Each picture shows one or several of the characters in action, though there is little detail employed.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. These, divided under section headings corresponding to the chapters in the text, are grouped together at the end of the book in eight pages. Each chapter has three exercises following closely the pattern for "Roland" by the same authors. The pupils are required to practise idioms, answer comprehension questions, learn idiomatic or difficult sentences by heart and to broaden their general knowledge about specific points that arise from a reading of the text.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The authors have produced an eventful medieval story in an adapted and simplified form. Their work has the general appearance of a reader for the secondary stage. It should prove exciting for pupils who have the necessary range of language to read it rapidly. Many of the episodes are in a form which, with very little adaptation, could be dramatised and acted.

Despite the steps taken for simplification, vocabulary is still too extensive for juniors. The medieval atmosphere, which would be an asset if the story were told in the children's mother tongue, only serves to make comprehension more difficult and to introduce terms of scant conversational value. Even where a feature is not specifically medieval, vocabulary has come through from the original story which appears to disregard the principles of word frequency. It means in effect that the children would have to be occupied exclusively with the passive assimilation of the contents. Though this process could not be justified on French teaching grounds, it might have an appeal for the teacher whose main concern was to correlate history teaching with French.

Too many of the exercises are on grammatical points for this book to be recommended without reservation as a supplementary reader. If the aim is to create habits of reading for pleasure, it is essential to eliminate from the exercises features suggestive of main-course study. Illustrations are clear and adequate.

PURVIS, H. and WHITE, J.E.

Huon de Bordeaux

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 48), containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises:

	s.	d.
	2	9
Total cost	2	9

Oxford University Press, 1957.
Soft cover: 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This reader, intended for first year secondary school pupils, is an adaptation of a medieval French minstrel song. The story is set in medieval France, and the entire cultural setting of the text and illustrations reflects this time. The actions of the characters and their attitudes towards each other and the established code of knightly etiquette are typical of the period.

3. CONTENT. "Huon de Bordeaux" is a continuous story divided into fourteen chapters. Charlemagne, growing old, decides that his son, Charlot, should succeed him. A traitor, Amaury, contrives that Charlot should be killed by Huon de Bordeaux, who at the time is not aware of the prince's identity. Charlemagne outlaws Huon as a punishment and says that, unless he travels to Babylon where he is to perform some seemingly impossible tasks, he may never return to Bordeaux. The remainder of the story is devoted to Huon's journey to Babylon and his adventures on arrival. We are told of his encounter with the magician Oberon and of how he goes forth under his magic protection. After many adventures Huon returns to France having performed the tasks required of him. At the last moment treachery on the part of Huon's brother Gérard threatens to have Huon exiled, but Oberon appears and convinces Charlemagne of Huon's loyalty and honour. Gérard is executed and Oberon names Huon as his successor to his fairy kingdom.

The authors make no statement about the vocabulary selection in "Huon", but it is clearthat here, as in "Roland" and "Berthe aux Grands Pieds" the vocabulary has been dictated by the original Old French text. The words are modern for the most part however, though many are outside the normal vocabulary range for the first year of French (e.g. 'maille', 'gage', 'cor', 'fléau'). The authors have put footnotes throughout the text translating difficult words and phrases. The end-vocabulary contains some 650 words.

Written entirely in modern French (with the exception of a very few phrases as: il vente, p. 16 l.20, which is a little unusual) the authors have kept the narrative of this reader in the present tense. There are, however, a few occurrences of the future tense (sometimes of irregular verbs: irai, ferai) and of the perfect tense (including: je suis né). The grammar range is similar to the other two readers in this series and is quite wide, including the present participle, direct and indirect object-pronouns, relative pronouns in moninative and oblique cases. Sentence structures are on the whole kept simple; though there is a large percentage of complex sentences of all types; these however are usually straightforward.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. This booklet is uniform with the other two in the series and is set in clear medium size type on mid-weight paper. As with the other books the footnotes and exercises are set in smaller type. Layout of the text is normal for narrative with a high percentage of dialogue; chapters do not always start on new pages and vary in length from one to two pages. Conversation is punctuated in the French style: a dash preceding the spoken words. No use is made of inverted commas. The text and chapter headings are in French; the preface and instructions for the exercises are in English.

6. ILLUSTRATION. There are eleven clear black and white line drawings interspersed irregularly within the text. They range in size from $\frac{1}{4}$ page to a full page. Medieval in character, the illustrations depict people and events from the story; they show the characters in action with little irrelevant background detail.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. These are grouped together on eight pages after the text and are divided into sections corresponding to the chapters of the text. Each exercise is divided into three parts: A, B and C. Part A consists of verb drills often asking for a translation or conjugation of listed verbs from the chapter in question. B consists always of six comprehension questions to be answered in French, and C of general questions.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Huon de Bordeaux" is another medieval story in the Oxford Easy French Readers series. It deals with the later days of Charlemagne, and is constructed along the same general lines as "Berthe aux Grands Pieds". Unlike the other work, however, which is a legend with a grain of truth, "Huon de Bordeaux" contains a supernatural element in the shape of a giant depicted on page 27. The teacher wishing to use it with juniors would probably have to confine himself to teaching comprehension.

    A study of the exercises reveals a somewhat unusual combination. Verb drills do not add to the attractions of a supplementary reader. Some of the general questions asked in 'C' might well be considered as part of a history or geography lesson. The questionnaires are too short to serve a real purpose, and only encourage children to read the text either partially or superficially. In general illustrations and exercises call for the same comments as "Berthe aux Grands Pieds". The teacher is advised to expand the questionnaires, unless he wishes to cover the same ground by independent questioning.

2

PURVIS, H. and WHITE, J.E.

Roland

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 48), containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises:

	s.	d.
	2	9
Total cost	2	9

Oxford University Press, 1957.
Soft cover: 5" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. The authors of "Roland" make no statement about its aims, but it seems that, although this reader is clearly intended for the first year of the secondary school, its grammatical range excludes it from the class "first reader". The story is not original and is a more or less faithful adaptation of the well-known Old French epic poem: 'Le Chanson de Roland'. The cultural setting of the text and the accompanying illustrations is therefore medieval battle-camp life in Spain.

3. CONTENT. "Roland" is a continuous story divided into fifteen chapters or episodes. The time is the late 8th century, Charlemagne and his army have been engaged on their seven-year long Spanish campaign against the Sarracens. Only one town remains to be conquered - Saragossa, and it is here that Marsile, the Sarracen king, is in command. After holding council, Marsile decides to send presents to Charlemagne to make peace. Charlemagne holds council on receiving the presents and is advised, after some argument, to accept the gifts and Ganelon is chosen to take Charlemagne's message of acceptance back to Saragossa. Ganelon however, turns traitor and advises Marsile to make friends with Charlemagne and to follow his army back to France but to attack and destroy its rearguard, commanded by Roland, in a pass in the Pyrennees. Thus the chief captain, Roland, would be killed and a major part of the army destroyed. Ganelon returns to Charlemagne to say that Marsile has accepted the peace terms. The remainder of the story tells of the battle between the French rearguard and the Sarracens; of Roland's extreme bravery in the true medieval fashion and of how he and the whole of his army are destroyed. The cry for help is made too late and Charlemagne returns to find the rearguard beaten. The traitor Ganelon is duly tried and executed.

The authors do not mention their method of selecting vocabulary, though clearly much of it has been dictated by the original Old French. The end-vocabulary contains some 650 words, many of which are well outside the basic selection of Le Français Fondamental (e.g. chameau, échine, ensanglanté, vassal). There is no apparent control of vocabulary, Besides the end-vocabulary, difficult words are given, together with the appropriate English translation, at the foot of the page on which they occur.

The main verb-tense employed throughout this reader is the present. However, there are instances of the perfect tense (a été, a pris, etc.) and of the future (ira, hairai) - many of these are irregular verbs. Sentences are on the whole kept simple, though there are instances of sentences up to four lines in length. Direct and indirect object pronouns are included as well as relative pronouns. All grammar is modern and the conversation forms are kept in the 20c idiom.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. "Roland" is set in clear average-size type on mid-weight paper; the footnotes and the exercises are in much smaller type. The text has been laid out as a continuous narrative interspersed with conversation; chapters do not necessarily begin on a new page. The chapters themselves are of various lengths averaging about a page and a half. Conversation, which figures prominently in the text, is punctuated in the French style -

i.e. paragraphs of conversation commence with a dash. There is, however, one occasion where the inverted commas signifying the same speaker continuing into a new paragraph have been left out (p. 7, para. 1). All inverted commas are in the French style. The text and headings are in French, the introduction is in English, likewise the instructions for the exercises.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are twelve picture illustrations in "Roland" and one map of France and Spain. The pictures are in wood-cut style and occupy from one quarter to a whole page. Interspersed throughout the text, the illustrations depict important events in the story; they do not contain much detail.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. Eight pages of exercises are grouped together after the text under headings corresponding to the chapters in the story. Each section has three exercises, the first of which is headed 'Verb drills'. In this exercise the pupil may be required to list forms found in the chapter or translate and explain or conjugate particular verbs. The second exercise consists of six comprehension questions in French. The final exercise is often a general knowledge exercise, as: 'Find out all you can about Charlemagne'; or translation from French into English, or some practice in the use of idioms.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The celebrated story of Roland which first appeared as a poem in the twelfth century is retold here in simplified modern French. Though the literary quality and atmosphere of suspense of the original are inevitably lost in the process, the bare essentials of a poignant drama are conveyed.

This reader is within the language range of the Secondary School pupil, but probably beyond that of the young beginner. A Primary School teacher might have to confine the teaching to comprehension only. Unless children re-use the actual language of the text, however, what they are effectively retaining is little more than the thread of the story. No knowledge of French is better than half-knowledge, and it would be better to tell the story in English.

Exercises and questions are of the same type as already evaluated for other readers in this series. The illustrations are an improvement on those appearing in "Huon de Bordeaux" and "Berthe aux Grands Pieds".

REEVES, E. C.

Un Voyage en Bateau

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 40), containing text, illustrations and end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	11	6
Total cost	11	6

Ginn & Co., Boston, 1961.
Hard cover: 7¼" x 9¼".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A reader for use in American Elementary Schools. No statement is made as to the average age of the pupils for whom it is intended, or whether it is a first reader or not. The cultural background is partly French and partly American.

3. CONTENT. The text is a continuous story in three parts. It is about a French boy named André who is given the unexpected pleasure of a voyage to the United States. At the port of embarkation his two pets, a dog and a cat, manage to get on board and hide in a life-boat until the ship is under way. André's search for the pets takes him to the different parts of the ship. They are finally discovered with the chef, and the birth of ten puppies is made the occasion for introducing the numbers. The story ends when the ship arrives at New York.

There is no indication of the basis of vocabulary selection. A little over two hundred words are listed in the end vocabulary. On an average about six new words are introduced on a page. Owing to the limited amount of text, the proportion of new words to running words is high. There is nothing to show which words are new in a given chapter.

Despite the use of a considerable number of irregular verbs the grammatical content is simplified to a certain extent. The story is told in the present tense with occasional references to the perfect and the future. Conversational expressions are introduced regularly. Though question forms are rare, most of the interrogative words are represented. Simple sentences predominate without being made the rule.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text is on stout paper. Large, clear print is used and the lines are somewhat spaced. The adventures are set out in a variety of ways on the page, and here and there the page itself is of a different colour. The three parts of the story are of a different length. Narrative form of presentation is found throughout. Conversational French, of which there is a considerable proportion, is punctuated in a way that resembles the French fashion. The dashes to indicate a change of speaker, however, are not aligned down the page. French only is used in the text, except at a point near the end when André is learning English.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Coloured pictures appear on nearly every page and on the covers. They vary in size between the full page illustration and the one occupying less than half the page. A considerable range of bright colours is used. Most of the pictures represent situations and are closely connected with the accompanying text. People in the drawings are generally given cheerful expressions.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The subject matter of the story is likely to prove interesting to juniors. Action is going on all the time and there is no lack of humorous touches. The plentiful supply of illustrations will help the teacher to solve the problem of re-employing the language found in the text. Also the bright colours and general features of a children's book are sure to prove an attraction.

Though the text has been kept conveniently short and certain steps have been taken to simplify it (e.g. use of brief utterances, simple themes and conversational forms), the grammar and vocabulary are not fully controlled. There is, for example, on page 32, a sentence containing thirty-one words and four clauses. Though this is exceptional, the language as a whole still seems insufficiently simple for children in need of a first reader.

The French is in general authentic, the misnaming of two objects illustrated on page 10 (culotte and casquette) being uncharacteristic. Provided that "Un Voyage En Bateau" is not introduced too early and that the pace is not too quick, it should serve a useful purpose in the Junior School.

There are no comprehension questions, and no ready-made exercises to enable the children to re-use the language of the text. Whatever the favourite practice of an individual teacher may be, allowances have to be made for variety of approach. The questionnaire (or some other device serving the same end) is a facility that the teacher of a foreign language reader is entitled to expect.

REMACHEL, H.

Le Roman de Renard

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 80), containing text, illustrations and exercises.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
Paper cover	3	3	Limp linson	4	0
Total cost	3	3	Total cost	4	0

Hachette, London and 79 Bd, Saint-Germain, Paris, 1962.
Soft cover: 4½" x 7".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This book appears in the series entitled "Illustrated Basic French Readers", distributed exclusively in the United Kingdom by the above-mentioned publisher. It is intended for either the top primary or lower secondary stage. The text is an adaptation of the well-known literary work of the same name within the language range of the "Textes en Français Facile". The main characters being animals and birds, there is no distinct cultural setting. Some of the illustrations contain general western features.

3. CONTENT. Each of the thirty chapters averages just over two pages and provides an episode in the adventurous life of Renard the fox. Most of the book traces the changing relationship between Renard and his 'uncle', Isengrin the wolf. The opening chapter contrasts their physique and qualities. The rest show how Renard's cunning and smooth tongue repeatedly cause trouble for Isengrin. The latter under Renard's influence makes unsuccessful attempts at climbing a church tower to catch the 'hen' (i.e. weathervane) on top, catching fish by lowering a bucket tied to his tail, and stealing food from a passing cart. Later Renard is seen pouring hot water over Isengrin's head, leaving him at the bottom of a well, and saving himself from Isengrin's wrath by taking refuge in a mill. They then become friends again and Isengrin disappears from the story. Renard is successful in one more adventure when he carries off Chantecler the cock, before being outwitted and killed by the combined efforts of a bird named Drouin and an old dog.

Vocabulary is based upon the list given in 'Le Français Fondamental' (Premier Degré). A note on the cover states that the series employs limited vocabularies of 700, 800, 1,000 and 1,300 words. The figure for this particular reader is not provided. Despite the apparent simplicity of the text, it cannot have much less than 1,000 words. However, their close connection with action in situation tends to reduce the vocabulary burden.

The simplicity apparent in the choice of words, the use of dramatic form, the constant action etc. are not altogether paralleled on the grammatical and syntactical plane. Whereas present, future and perfect tenses prevail, the imperfect, the conditional, the pluperfect and (rarely) the present subjunctive are also found. Side by side with the simple constructions there are sentences containing subordinate clauses of all three kinds. This leads at times to sentences that are three lines long, e.g. p. 9. 'Quand j'ai vu que tous les paysans couraient après vous avec leurs chiens, je suis revenu et j'ai pu prendre tranquillement deux poules.'

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. An introductory note to the questions and exercises points out that reading for pleasure alone is not enough. The exercises are provided to make the reading useful for the purpose of increasing the children's command of French.

5. PRESENTATION. "Le Roman de Renard" is set in clear, medium-sized type on rather thin paper. With the exception of remarks on the cover the reader is printed entirely in French. Its table of contents occupies the usual French position at the back. As the text is entirely in dramatic form, the question of choosing a satisfactory way to punctuate speech forms does not arise.

6. **ILLUSTRATIONS.** All pictures are in black and white. They depict animals, birds and occasionally persons in complete situations. There are two full-page illustrations at the beginning of the book, after which smaller pictures occupy the top portion (i.e. one third) of every page of text.

7. **ACTIVITIES.** None.

8. **EXERCISES.** The exercises assigned to each chapter are printed in sequence at the end of the book. A large proportion are questions, mostly about the text but occasionally about the pictures. In addition to factual questions there are some that appeal to the child's own judgement.

   Other exercises include the changing or completion of given sentences, the framing of sentences on given syntactical models, the re-creation of the dialogue in changed circumstances, and acting the essentials of the scene.

9. **AUDIO AIDS.** None.

10. **GENERAL COMMENTS.** "Le Roman de Renard" is an attractive story that is sure to appeal to the age group for which it was written. (See 2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION). Whilst there is a continuous thread of action through the book as a whole, each chapter has the advantage of containing a well-defined episode. The directness of the language and its constant reflection of the ways in which real people think and act will make it popular with children who are at the level of French to read it with ease. The continuous series of pictures serves a number of purposes including the long-term memorisation of the plot. It is also reassuring to have unquestionably authentic French.

    A word of caution is necessary because appearances make this reader look easier than it really is. Attention has been drawn in CONTENT above to the fairly wide range of tenses and sentence structure. This language is a very good example of what comes easily to French children of 9 or 10 but offers unsuspected difficulties to non-French children of the same age. But for the simplicity of the story and the clear indication of vocabulary restriction it would have been necessary to omit this book from the bibliography. The Primary School French teacher would naturally like his children to read rapidly within the same centres of interest as French children of the same age. However, texts suitable for the latter who have experienced French as a mother tongue from birth, are of necessity beyond the language range of British juniors starting the foreign language at 8 or 9.

    The illustrations and varied exercises are an asset. On the whole this reader has merits which will make some Primary French teachers want to try it out on their ten-year-old children. This should prove possible with a certain degree of selection and adaptation.

SMITH, S. M.

Pierre au Village

1. **COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.**

Pupils' reader (pp. 72), containing text, illustrations, end-vocabulary, exercises, verb tables:

	s.	d.
	2	9
Total cost	2	9

University of London Press, Ltd., Warwick Square, London E.C.4.
1952 (4th impression 1964). Soft cover: 5" x 7¼".

2. **GENERAL DESCRIPTION.** "Pierre au Village" is intended as 'an attempt to provide reading material for pupils in the early stages of French'; as such it was primarily written as a first-year secondary school reader. The story lines and their treatment seem to be original. Both the text and the accompanying illustrations reflect a background that is not markedly French.

3. **CONTENT.** The reader is divided into twenty chapters, each representing an episode in a continuous story. Monsieur and Madame Leclerc come from Paris with their thirteen-year-old son Pierre to their new home in the country. At first Pierre is sad at having left behind his friends, but he soon finds that village life is not dull. He makes friends with Nicole who lives next door and who is eleven years old; she has a young brother Jean-Michel. They have various adventures together and with two puppies Ric and Rac. Three of Pierre's friends, Henri, Jules and Louis come to spend a fortnight in the country and because there is not enough room in the house all four camp in the garden. Several adventures are described including Pierre's amusing efforts at giving his dog Ric his first bath. Finally on the campers' last night the grown-ups (Pierre's and Nicole's parents, together with cousin Mathilde who has been convalescing at the Leclercs') are invited to have a camp dinner with the children.

The authoress gives no indication of her method of vocabulary selection and about 610 words are listed in the end-vocabulary. These appear to rise naturally from the situations and there is much repetition of both words and phrases throughout the text. The new words are introduced at a regular rate of about twelve per chapter and these are listed with their English translations at the end of each text; often a few phrases are appended to these short word-lists.

The grammatical range is restricted to points associated with the early stages. The present tense appears throughout. A limited use is made of the object pronouns and these are introduced gradually. Though sentence structure is kept simple on the whole, there are instances of subordinate clauses.

4. **NOTES FOR TEACHER.** None.

5. **PRESENTATION.** The text of this reader is set in clear, average-size type on mid-weight paper. The text itself is mostly in narrative form interspersed with conversation. Chapter 12, however, is in dramatic form and chapter 13 is in the form of a letter. Each lesson is generally two to three pages in length and French is used exclusively for the texts and headings, while English occurs only in the vocabularies and verb tables. Most lessons have a fair proportion of conversational form which is punctuated throughout in the English style.

6. **ILLUSTRATIONS.** These are black-and-white line drawings, usually two or three per lesson comprising a large (¼ page) general picture and other smaller pictures. The larger illustrations are of part of the situational material while the smaller pictures are usually of individual objects or people mentioned in the lesson text.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. These are to be found at the end of each chapter. They consist of comprehension questions on the text with the general introduction: 'Répondez en français'. A table of verbs is appended to the text and consists of patterns of typical present tenses of the three regular conjugations and one first conjugation reflexive verb. There follows a list of the most frequently used irregular verbs (sixteen in number) with their present-tense conjugations set out.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Pierre au Village" is an interesting continuous story which touches life at many points. Though the author makes use of everyday themes, there is an abundance of incident that always prevents the atmosphere from becoming humdrum. The reader is written for the first year of the secondary stage, but may well prove suitable for ten-year-old juniors with a good foundation in French. Though at times both vocabulary and sentence construction are likely to create difficulties, there is plenty of material at a simpler level and young children's interests are well served.

There are two chapters offering a change from the normal narrative form of presentation. One is a playlet and the other a letter. Both contain sentence types of the more complex kind, but the Junior School teacher will find simpler French in the other chapters.

Questionnaires are of appropriate length and contain suitably varied questions. The illustrations show variety in type and size, but are on the whole rather small.

SOLOMON, G. G.

Je Sais Lire

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 112), containing text, illustrations, questions and drawing exercises:

	s.	d.
	6	0
Total cost	6	0

Heinemann, London, 1932.
Reset edition 1965. Limp cover: 5⅜" x 8½".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A reader intended for juniors. It is claimed that children under ten can read it with a teacher's help, and that intelligent children over ten can pick it up unaided and without previous knowledge of French. The cultural background is neutral.

3. CONTENT. The reader, which contains the same set of characters throughout, has thirty-five chapters. Though some of the chapters provide a continuous thread of narrative, each one has a separate title and a clear-cut episode. The story is about the humanised life and activities of Monsieur Coq, Madame Poule, and their chickens Linette, Minette and Ninette. Early chapters introduce the family, their house and domestic life. From an early point prominence is given to the escapades of Ninette, the mischievous member of the family. In turn she gets her dress dirty, loses her shoes, breaks crockery, soils the bed-linen, raids the pantry, smashes 'objets d'art' while acting in the drawing-room, floods the bathroom, eats jam with fish, and tries to elope with a pink pig. As a punishment her mother gives her somewhat novel impositions, through which the author introduces into his reader the paradigms of verb tenses. The story is full of incident to the end.

No information is given as to the basis of vocabulary selection, and no lists of the words used are provided at any point in the book. A note on the front cover suggests that meaning should be self-evident from illustrations and context.

The reader draws upon a considerable range of grammatical items. Tenses used include the present, perfect, future, imperfect and conditional. Syntactic progression is very rapid. The first page contains sentences that are short, repetitive and very simple. The length of sentences increases soon afterwards, and subordinate clauses start at Chapter 8. By the middle and latter stages structures that are much more complex than those in the opening pages are used.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text is in large, clear type. Despite the apparent thickness of the paper in the specimen copy received, illustrations or print on the reverse side can still be seen through it. Opening chapters are of one page each. Those that follow, with the exception of Chapter 23, vary between one and five pages in length. The text is in narrative form throughout. The proportion of conversational French used varies from one chapter to another, but is on the whole considerable. The stories are punctuated in the English manner. The text and exercises, including all footnotes, are in French.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Most of the pictures are of isolated objects, the names of which are printed underneath. These pictures are in sets, and are usually accompanied by one illustration that depicts a complete situation and has a whole sentence attached. In every case a whole page is set aside for up to a dozen or more small pictures. All the early chapters and some of the later ones are illustrated in this way. Black and white are used for all illustrations except two which are in colour and on paper with a gloss finish.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. At the end of the reader there is a questionnaire relating to each chapter. In this there is an average of five questions on the substance of the story. Each list of questions is followed by instructions telling the children to draw objects and write their names.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The author has produced spirited reading material which should prove interesting to juniors. Whether it comes into the hands of children over or under ten years of age, comprehension of text is not likely to prove a stumbling block. To a large extent the meaning is made self-evident as a result of the numerous illustrations of objects mentioned in the text. It must be admitted at the same time that pictures serving the purpose of verbal comprehension do not have the same attraction as those depicting a scene in an interesting story. The convenient length of the chapters and the arrangement of the separate episodes will commend themselves to teachers.

The inclusion of a questionnaire for each chapter is a step which will commend itself to some more than others. On the one hand it encourages the inexperienced teacher to carry out his check on comprehension by direct method procedures, and helps him to see how unnecessary it is to resort to translation for the same purpose. It also emphasises the fact that a foreign language reader is not merely something for the children to understand, but also a source of enjoyable and necessary oral practice in the foreign language. On the other hand a more experienced teacher of French will not need this encouragement, and will carry out this oral practice independently of a textbook questionnaire. There is also a danger that misuse of the questionnaire will lead to a lack of spontaneity in the oral work and the use of speech forms that are remote from normal conversation.

Perhaps the chief ground for criticism is that children are encouraged to learn words from the printed page. When vocabulary is obtained in this way, gains in comprehension are frequently offset by faulty notions of pronunciation, acquired at the same time. Under classroom conditions, however, the teacher can always arrange for new words to be encountered orally first.

SOLOMON, G.G.

Le Français Pour Les Jeunes

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader containing introduction, text, illustrations and exercises:

		s.	d.
Book I (La Vie de Madame Souris.	pp. 60)	4	3
Book II (La Vie de Madame Lapine.	pp. 76)	4	9
Book III (Les Lapins et Les Souris.	pp. 123)	5	9
	Total cost	14	9

Dent & Sons, Ltd., London.
Book I - 1926, last reprint 1961.
Book II - 1926, last reprint 1963.
Book III - 1926, last reprint 1965. Hard cover: 6" x 8".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A first reader for primary school children. The age at which the series should be begun is not stated. It contains original stories. It is written 'with the idea of making the introduction to French a pleasure to children instead of the tedious task it often is'. The cultural background of these animal stories is neutral.

3. CONTENT. Book I is a series of passages, partly narrative and partly descriptive. The main characters are a family of mice consisting of Madame Souris, her son Louis, her daughter Yvonne and friends and relations. They are all humanised animals, eating the things people eat, wearing the things people wear, learning French verbs as children have been known to learn them, and reacting like human beings generally. The chief activities are eating in the garden, learning lessons, fishing, singing, indulging in irresponsible frolics, bathing and going to bed.

Book II, of similar construction, passes to the rabbit world. It is about the family of Madame Lapine, who were introduced in Book I as friends of the family of Madame Souris. Their house is in a wood near Paris. Some of the earlier chapters deal with home life, and there are scenes in the kitchen, in the garden, in the dining-room and in the house generally. Others show the young rabbits repeatedly setting out for school having forgotten something or other, and learning lessons in a heterogeneous class consisting of two mice, two butterflies, two snails, two chickens and two rabbits. Later chapters show increased variety of theme, and include the French equivalent of "The House that Jack Built" and an imaginary account of the rabbit family being forced out of its home.

In Book III mice and rabbits are brought together. The story is momentarily placed in the setting of World War 1. Madame Souris is removed from the scene in most remarkable circumstances by a German Zeppelin. Louis and Yvonne, now virtually orphaned, benefit from kindness shown by various animals. They are accepted into Madame Lapine's family, and enjoy a visit to the Zoo with the two children and their uncle. Their attendance at school next day is made the occasion for introducing the numbers from 20 to 100 and another story of the cumulative variety. The second part of Book III, like the latter half of Book II, covers a great number of themes. These include spring cleaning, lessons, the illness of a member of the family, a children's game, holidays at the sea-side and the surprise return of Madame Souris.

No statement is made about the basis of vocabulary selection. In the introduction it is claimed that the language is simple and that all the verbs used in Book 1 can be taught by gesture. There is no vocabulary list in any of the three books, and no indication of the total number of words used. Reliance is placed on general simplicity of expression and a careful choice of theme which permits the constant repetition of language used. The general impression is of a large total vocabulary, and an increased intake of new words per chapter in Book II and Book III.

The author's idea of 'making the introduction to French a pleasure to children' carries with it the implication that the series is intended to fulfil the functions of course-book and reader within the same covers. This is confirmed by the high degree of simplification that occurs only in the opening chapters, and by the appearance of tabulations of the simplest verbs.

Book I makes use of the present tense from the beginning and the perfect tense from Chapter 5. Book II adds the future from Chapter II, contains isolated cases of the present subjective and the conditional tenses, and starts using the past historic tense for narrative purposes a few pages before the end. Book III resorts, in addition, to a regular use of the imperfect, the conditional and the past perfect tenses. The greater part of Book III draws upon seven tenses as well as the subjunctive mood. The length and complexity of sentences increase progressively in the three books. Book I is written almost exclusively in simple sentences. Book II introduces subordinate clauses, mostly adjectival, at fairly regular intervals. The later stages of Book III show more complexity as regards syntax.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. The teacher is advised to let the children learn and act the scenes that are 'built around such commonplace events as eating, shopping, travelling, etc.'. The use of the second person plural as a mode of address is preferred on the grounds that 'this form will be the one generally needed later on'. The teacher is cautioned against using the stories as materialfor translation exercises, but told not to hesitate to translate the occasional word to clarify the meaning. It is also suggested that children should be encouraged to write similar stories about other animals, as 'free composition is now an important feature of examinations'.

5. PRESENTATION. The text of the three books is on stout paper. Large, clear print is used for Books I and II, and a size slightly smaller for Book III. In Book I each chapter is made to occupy one page, and each sentence begins on a new line. In Book II the length varies between one and five pages, and paragraphs appear. Book III contains two chapters each of fifteen pages. All three books are presented in narrative form. Conversational forms, punctuated in the English fashion, are well represented, especially in Books II and III. French only is used for the text and the words accompanying the illustrations.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. In Book I a page of illustrations, generally in black and white but occasionally in colour, stands opposite each chapter. The pattern varies with the longer chapters of Book II. Sometimes there are two illustrations to a page, and occasionally a chapter is not accompanied by an illustration. Two of the illustrations are in colour on glossed paper. Book III is on similar lines to Book II, with pictures occupying a proportionately smaller amount of space. Some of the pictures are of isolated objects and help to clarify the meaning of individual words. Others depict a situation occurring in the corresponding chapter.

7. ACTIVITIES. Apart from a game incorporated in one of the chapters there are no songs or games.

8. EXERCISES. At the end of each book there are sets of exercises related to the chapters. The first exercise invariably involves the translation into French of a number of English sentences. In the second exercise (i.e. up to Book II, Chapter 13) the children are asked to draw pictures. Other exercises include the following: free composition on the theme of a chapter just read, translation of connected English into French, description of an illustration in the reader, reproduction of events narrated in the chapter, and description of characters, objects or places mentioned.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. **GENERAL COMMENTS.** On the whole this series is thought to be suitable for the upper junior stage. There is action, conversational exchange, and amusement. At times it is even reminiscent of "Alice in Wonderland" (e.g. Book III, p. 32, lower half, and p. 33). Though there is the possibility that by the time Book III is reached the more intelligent children will have had enough of the process by which human beings are metamorphosed into animals, stories of this type have been known to succeed well beyond the junior stage.

The intake of new words is rather high. The author, however, is on his guard against giving the pupils linguistic indigestion. The vocabulary is well within the children's world, and the policy of constantly repeating the theme helps to reinforce the impression made by new words. The advice to the teacher to avoid the practice of translating the French text into English strikes a note of progressiveness not found often enough in the readers now under consideration. It would have been helpful if the author had followed up this advice by providing concrete assistance (e.g. questionnaires) to the teacher whose own French was unsure. This would have given the latter the encouragement needed to adopt the sound practice of testing comprehension by direct method processes.

Though the range of tenses might well be considered too great for juniors, and their order of introduction somewhat questionable, the French is on the whole authentic. Perhaps the most unfortunate feature is the recurrent use of the past historic tense in the first person, e.g. Book III p. 78 'Je fus bien content. Nous commençâmes à chercher de petites brances ..... Que nous fûmes contents!' Such sentences suggest patterns that are impossible in ordinary French conversation. Children called upon to speak French under the influence of such reading will either make outright mistakes or else suffer from unnecessarily impeded fluency. Despite these shortcomings which are confined to more advanced reading stages, the series is considered to make a useful contribution to reading at the primary level.

The quality and distribution of the illustrations through the series are quite satisfactory. In choosing exercises the teacher is advised to avoid both translation and any practice of continuous French which may be beyond the powers of the average child.

SPINK, J. E. and MILLIS, V.

Colette et ses Frères

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' mixed reader (pp. 182), containing foreword, text, illustrations, exercises, questionnaires and end-vocabulary:

	£	s.	d.
	1	8	0
Total cost	1	8	0

Ginn & Co., Boston 1926 and 1954.
Hard cover: 5" x 7½".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A mixed reader for use in American Elementary schools and Junior High Schools. It is not stated to be a first reader but is offered for consideration 'wherever a teacher is seeking simple and interesting reading matter for young pupils'. The main thread of these stories is original French, though in addition simplification of well-known fables, fairy stories and other literary works are incorporated. It is stated in the foreword that the reader was compiled because 'sufficiently easy reading matter is difficult to find'. The two stated aims are 'first to provide material simple enough to meet the needs of the young beginners; second, to make that simple material of such interest that the pupil will be lured on to read for the sake of the story'. Whilst the background is not particularly French, a certain amount of French culture is reflected by the simplification of French literary works and by occasional references in the stories themselves.

3. CONTENT. The text consists of a series of fifty-six short stories, each with a title in capitals. The recurrent characters in these stories are the various members of the Gautier family. Colette Gautier, her elder brother René, her younger brother Jean, their parents, friends, nanny, gardener, and pets are the central figures. Either in the shape of persons or animals new characters come in at regular intervals. Animal characters play a large but never exclusive part in the stories, many of which reveal childish pranks, humorous touches and a surprise finish. Variety of theme and character is secured by working into the stories at intervals simplifications of well-known literary works. At one point grand-père Gautier reads to the children five fables of La Fontaine in simple prose form. At other points Colette 'reads' a simplified form of Little Red Riding-Hood and Tom Thumb. Towards the end Mme. Félique, the nanny, recounts to the children an episode from 'Les Misérables' which she is reading. At the end M. Gautier retells a war story for the benefit of his younger son, and the reader concludes with a film version of Daudet's 'La Dernière Classe'.

Though no reference is made to word frequency lists, the attitude of the authors towards the selection and introduction of vocabulary is reflected in the following statement: 'We have used simple words and idioms, but notwithstanding this fact we have provided for constant repetition. New vocabulary is introduced very slowly, so that the new expressions may quickly and surely become a real part of the pupil's equipment'. An end-vocabulary contains about 1,400 entries assembled on the basis that each different part of a verb used is to be listed separately.

The authors state that the stories are chiefly in the present tense, and that 'when other tenses are introduced their use is so natural that the pupil understands them without difficulty'. Functional grammar at the elementary stage is covered very thoroughly, and the progression can be seen in the series of exercises extending from page 100 to 157. Regarding syntax the authors state: 'We have sought to reduce phraseology and sentence structure to their lowest terms'. There is, in fact, a full exploitation of the technique by which stories are reduced to a series of simple sentences. A study of later stories shows that subordinate clauses of all three categories are used. They are, however, spaced out carefully and a general impression of simplicity remains.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. A note referring to the stories points out that 'Because of their brevity and dramatic quality they can, with only a few exceptions, easily be acted out or retold'.

5. PRESENTATION. The text is on smooth, good quality paper. The stories themselves are in medium-sized print. Slightly smaller print is reserved for the simplification of literary works and special stories. Apart from the songs the text is almost exclusively in narrative form. Whereas in most cases an actual story is told, items can be found which are partly or wholly descriptive. Conversational forms are worked into the text regularly, and reasons are given for not punctuating them in the French manner. The authors say: "The American system of quoting has been used as another device for decreasing the difficulties and thus hastening the adjustment of the young pupil to the new idiom. The French system of using the dash does not readily convey the idea of speech to the English-speaking child. It seems to us that time can be gained by using the American system of punctuation during the early reading; later the change can be made to the French system without any difficulty'. French only occurs in the text, but English is resorted to in the course of the grammatical exercises.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. There are illustrations accompanying the text on all the opening pages. They are kept up throughout the book, but become less frequent. The range of colours includes black, grey, white, red and pink, Most pictures are enclosed in red rectangular frames. The amount of space occupied varies between three quarters and one fifth of a page, In almost every case a situation occurring in the text of the same or the opposite page is depicted.

7. ACTIVITIES. Songs, printed with their music, include: A Paris, Frère Jacques, Chanson de l'Alphabet, Trempe ton Pain, Marie and J'aime un bon Tabac. One or two charades and games are included in the main stories.

8. EXERCISES. Fifty-seven pages of exercises follow one hundred pages of text. The exercises reveal a grammatical progression of the sort normally associated with a main course rather than a reader. Some of them are based upon the supposition that the class can both read and write French. Many are different kinds of blank-filling or substitution exercises. A certain amount of grammatical tabulation goes with the exercises. A regular feature is the 'Entretien' or questionnaire relating to the story which has been read. There are also examples of the exercises in which answers or statements are provided for conversion into questions.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. This reader gives the impression of being very carefully prepared both as regards the choice of themes and the language used. Interesting, varied and conveniently short stories have been provided in language that is a model of straightforwardness. The incorporation of simplified stories from literature in a series of original adventures is an interesting idea which makes the reader very comprehensive. It brings with it all the benefits that derive from recurrent characters, whilst at the same time providing the reader with a periodic change from them. Though the number of pages devoted to exercises may seem excessive for a reading-book, the inexperienced teacher is usually glad to have a ready-made means of consolidating and practising the French.

Despite all these advantages one still has to speak with caution about the suitability for primary school pupils of a reader intended for use in both Elementary Schools and Junior High Schools. The very expression 'young beginners' is a somewhat vague and relative term. Whatever claims may be made about the suitability of books for children, on psychological grounds it is impossible to agree that a particular book is suitable for two successive age ranges. Where this claim is made, it is certain that there is too much material and too wide a vocabulary for the lower age range. Such is the case here. Whilst 'Colette et ses Frères' contains stories that are suitable for primary school children, it has the disadvantage of displaying at the same time more French than can be assimilated at the primary stage. (i.e. In the prevailing circumstances in which children start at 8 plus and spend their first year on Oral French.)

From the exercises the teacher is advised to select what is closely connected with the stories themselves and re-employs their language. He should also be able to make good use of the coloured pictures.

TOPPING, A. M.

Les Duval

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 72), containing text, illustrations, detachable end-vocabulary:

	s.	d.
	5	0
Total cost	5	0

Edward Arnold Ltd., London.
1963. Soft cover: 5½" x 8½".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. Sub-titled "Premier Livre de Français", this reader was originally written for the 4th, 5th and 6th streams of the first year in a 7-stream comprehensive school. Classes had had one month of purely oral French before starting this reader. The material is original and the setting is modern French middle-class town life with illustrations in keeping with the textual material.

3. CONTENT. "Les Duval" is divided into twenty-nine unnumbered chapters consisting of episodes in the life of the Duval family. There are three children in the family: Marie (12 years old), Paul (11 years old) and Pierre (2 years old). The lesson texts centre around activities at home (e.g. Mme. Duval and Marie preparing soup, laying the table for lunch, etc.) or sometimes away from home (e.g. Paul at class, a cinema visit, a picnic). Others of the varied episodes include "L'Anniversaire de Marie", "Oncle Charles" (who is always kind to the children and takes them to the cinema), "Paul Prend un Bain", "Les Vacances" - a descriptive passage about the children's activities on holiday on a farm.

The end-vocabulary contains some 400 words and has been selected to provide 'a sound basis for class-room conversation and for more advanced study later on'. The end-vocabulary is detachable and may be removed; the author states in the Preface that 'all the passages have been written in such a way that they may easily be explained in French' and that the end-vocabulary has been included 'because many schools require homework and it is not considered desirable for first year pupils to use a dictionary to find a word they have forgotten'.

The passages in "Les Duval" are written entirely in the present tense. Infinitives, comparatives, object and relative pronouns have been avoided completely. The author says in the Preface that he has introduced a gradual grammatical progression with much repetition. This progression is also evident in the sentence-structure, although even towards the end of the reader sentences are kept simple and short. Subordinate clauses, mainly adverbial clauses expressing time, are infrequent and straightforward.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. The text of this reader is printed on stout paper and the type is clear and large. Each lesson-text is set out with double line-spacing on a left-hand page opposite its accompanying illustration. Each new sentence, however short, is begun on a new line. Except in the end-vocabulary and preface, French is used exclusively. Conversation takes up a relatively small proportion of the texts, but the narrative itself contains many conversational forms. Punctuation is in the English style.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. These are black and white line drawings in a modern style. Each occupies a whole page facing the text it goes with and is clear although very detailed. The illustrations usually include all the characters in the passage in action in the particular situation of the text. The author explains in the preface that the detail in the illustrations has been included to help teach words not contained in the reading material and also for written and oral composition. The illustrations are to 'help the teacher explain the story in French'.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. Written for the first year of the Comprehensive School, "Les Duval" is very much simpler than readers intended for the first year of the secondary stage generally. It is used by classes that have received purely oral French for a month. This brings it well within the category of books that can be recommended for the Junior School.

Scenes from the daily life of young children are told almost exclusively in statements expressed in simple sentences. Events are arranged in a natural sequence. The value for language teaching purposes of the sequential idea, first realised by the Frenchman, F. Gouin, in the latter half of the 19th century, should not be underestimated.

"Les Duval" is not really a supplementary reader but a rather unusual approach to French. It looks like the equivalent in printed textual form of an audio-visual course. If each of the sentences were put on tape and given visual illustration by film-strip or slides, it would become an audio-visual course. However, as the sentences are supplied in the form of a printed text, it is left to the teacher's own devices to supply the necessary illustration. General principles governing the audio-visual approach would be applicable here. If the language of the text is to serve the purpose of personal communication, it needs to receive full re-employment in the first and second persons and in interrogative form.

This reader contains large, clear and well arranged pictures throughout. It is doubtful whether there should be an end-vocabulary when illustrations are so helpful and when exercises and questions are omitted. At the initial stages of language learning all vocabulary should be assimilated from the teacher's own speech or a recording, so that first impressions of pronunciation are accurate. The existence of an end-vocabulary for children still in their first term of French may appear to be a convenience, but carries the danger of encouraging misguided 'preparation' of chapters ahead.

VACHERON, E.

Voici Henri

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 62), containing text, illustrations and end-vocabulary:

	£	s.	d.
	1	2	0
Total cost	1	2	0

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1959.
Hard cover: 6" x 8".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A first reader for use in American Elementary Schools. It is designed for children who are beginning to read French, no mention being made of their precise age. It is the French version of a book in English entitled "Here is Henri". E. Vacheron is a French teacher of French descent. V. Kahl, the artist, specialises in children's picture books. Though a few French objects are represented in the illustrations (e.g. a flag, a béret, a calendar and a dog resembling a French poodle) the cultural setting is neutral. No special aim is stated.

3. CONTENT. The reader contains three chapters and they have no numbers. The first introduces the two main characters, a French boy named Henri and a cat named Michel. A description of their numerous relatives gives the author an opportunity to introduce the numbers. Peter and Michel purchase a large fish in the market, and the two families assemble under Peter's roof to eat it. Chapter 2 describes Henri's vain search for his red umbrella, and his subsequent discovery that Michel is using it as an improvised shelter in the garden. In Chapter 3 Michel and Henri go for a walk in the park on a Sunday. They send various people hurrying away by suggesting it is a day later in the week. Henri's mother and sisters, however, are not taken in, and turn the tables on Henri by reminding him that he is late for church.

No statement is made about the basis of vocabulary selection. An end-vocabulary lists 195 words or phrases in bold print together with the English. These are distributed evenly over the three chapters, but are not listed for each chapter.

The grammatical forms used are simple but not lacking in variety. Most of the story is written in the present tense, and draws upon regular verbs of the -er type (a few being reflexive) together with about 11 irregular verbs. One or two cases of the perfect tense are also found indispensable for the telling of the story. About five simple question types occur. Apart from an occasional conditional clause the authoress uses only simple sentences.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. Stout paper and large, clear type are used for the text, the story contained in each chapter is spread out over 14 to 20 pages, but rarely occupies more than half the page owing to the presence of illustrations and the necessity of connecting them with the text. It is in narrative form and contains a high proportion of conversational forms once the introduction has been completed. For these the French system of punctuation is used, according to which a dash at the beginning of a line indicates a change of speaker. French only is used in the index and the text.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Pictures, appearing on most of the pages, account for more than half the total space. In addition to black and white, a range of colours including red, green, blue and yellow is drawn upon. An umbrella on page 38 is described as purple. The content of these illustrations varies between single objects and complete situations. These are closely connected with the text on the same or the opposite page.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. This reader provides material that is both lively and very simple. Each story, as the authoress claims, contains a surprise. Two of them make use of a repetition technique by which a new name or person appears in a short series of events that are happening over and over again. The adventures are related for the most part in a conversational form that is easy to remember and easy to act. The use of coloured pictures throughout is a distinct advantage. Despite the absence of any mention of the basis of selection for vocabulary and grammar intake, the authoress has produced a reader that is well within the powers of assimilation of young children. This means in practice that the teacher is left with adequate time to re-employ the language and test comprehension in French.

As in certain other readers of this stage, an attempt is made at the beginning of the book to provide the initial steps of French teaching and cover the ground that should be covered by the main course (audio-visual or textbook). Certain features of this introductory matter lack thoroughness. "Est" and "a" coming close together in the opening pages are likely to cause confusion; the indirect pronoun object "lui" on page 7 occurs before any direct pronoun objects have appeared; a mother speaks to her child using the second person plural in command; the very first question in the book is in the perfect tense. There are signs of the strain on idiom that arises when a given story has to be told within a very limited vocabulary.

On the whole "Voici Henri" is thought to be a useful first reader. It provides the short and simple text that is above all needed at this stage. It is not likely, however, that many teachers will consider ordering a sixty-two page elementary reader at such a high price.

VACHERON, E.

Encore Henri

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 64), containing text, illustrations and end-vocabulary:

	£	s.	d.
	1	2	0
Total cost	1	2	0

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1961.
Hard cover: 6" x 8".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A reader for use in American Elementary schools. It is said to be for 'beginning readers in the language' and is intended to follow "Voici Henri" by the same authoress. There is in a separate book an English version entitled "More about Henri". The age of the children for whom "Encore Henri" is intended is not stated. A few objects are recognisably French in a setting which is otherwise culturally neutral.

3. CONTENT. Henri and Michel, the two central characters of "Voici Henri", appear again in the three stories that this reader contains. The first, entitled "A la Campagne", describes a visit to Henri's aunt who lives on a country farm. Various animals are mentioned, all of which Michel professes to dislike except cats. "Le Déjeuner", the second story, shows Michel being invited to lunch with Henri. Henri's normal courses for lunch are all offered to the cat, but the latter has no appetite and goes home to drink a bowl of milk. In the last story, "Les Pilules", Henri assumes that Michel is unwell and helps him to buy pills at the chemist's. Whilst a discussion is going on as to what is wrong with Michel he reveals that it is his aunt who is unwell.

There is no statement as to the linguistic basis of vocabulary selection. Words and phrases are used becuase they are needed to tell these stories at a level of language considered to be simple. 274 words are listed in the end-vocabulary. As about a third of these have already appeared in the vocabulary of "Voici Henri", the actual intake of new words is about the same in the two books.

Grammatical forms show a range similar to that used in "Voici Henri", but with some amplification. The story does not take us out of the present tense. Though regular verbs of the -ir and -re groups are a new feature, there is no increase in the number of new irregular verbs. A greater variety of question-types are found, including one instance of 'A quoi sert .....?' Apart from one or two sentences containing relative clauses introduced by 'qui' or 'que', stories are written entirely in the simple sentence.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. A cover note states that the reader 'follows the highly approved method of teaching without translation and without phonetics'.

5. PRESENTATION. Stout paper and large type are used. Each story is spread out over sixteen to nineteen pages, but often a relatively small portion of the page contains text. The form of presentation is narrative throughout. After the introduction to the first story a high proportion of conversational forms is found. The French system of punctuation is used. French only occurs in the index and the text.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Large, coloured pictures accompany the text on most pages. These are within the range of black, white, red, green, blue and yellow. Sometimes they represent isolated objects, at other times a situational background is provided. They are, on the whole, closely connected to the portion of text they are intended to illustrate.

7. ACTIVITIES. None.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. These three stories are on the same general lines as those in "Voici Henri". They are full of action and have an unexpected conclusion. The repretition technique, already mentioned in connection with the other book, is again used to advantage. It provides an important element of suspense in the story-telling and helps to keep the language very simple. The material would be easy to teach along direct method lines, and providing the children are not beyond the stage when they can accept conversations between a boy and a cat, they should find it lively.

Whereas one might have supposed that in this second reader more space would have been devoted to text and less to illustrations, the proportion appears to be about the same. As the price is again high (no doubt owing to the many colours in the illustrations and the fact that the book is side-sewn and strongly reinforced), the teacher at this stage may begin to wonder whether he has enough reading material for his outlay. It is true that the illustrations themselves provide for supplementary oral practice at a time when fluent reading is not yet well established.

Teachers intending to use this reader should note that the second person plural 'vous' is used in reference to children. Perhaps the chief merit of "Encore Henri" is that it is one of a relatively small number of readers that are really simple enough to teach by approved methods at this early stage.

YOUNG, G.

L'Arche de Noé

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 64), containing preface, text, illustrations and songs:

	s.	d.
	5	0
Total cost	5	0

Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., London, 1957.
3rd reprint 1962. Soft cover: 7" x 9".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. A first reader for primary school children. It is written to provide lively reading material for children who are just beginning French. The possibility of using it as a course book in the primary school or as a supplementary reader in the first year of a grammar school is mentioned in the preface. It is original to the extent that it provides a simplified and imaginative account of a well-known story. The cultural content, dictated to some extent by an unchangeable background, is largely neutral.

3. CONTENT. The story, which covers events from Noah's construction of the Ark down to the arrival at Mount Ararat, is continuous. There are no chapters, and nothing greater than a paragraph division is used to separate the different episodes. Early paragraphs describe the entry of the animals into the completed Ark and the heavy rain which finished by making it water-borne. Apart from the three human characters, Mr. and Mrs. Noah and their baby, a number of animals and birds take part in the conversations and behave rather like children. These include the giraffe, the elephant, the sheep, the cow, the tiger, the hore, the kangaroo, the monkey, the camel, the dog, the pig, the donkey, the duck and some doves. Among the more exciting events are weathering a storm, meeting a friendly whale that sings a song, and encountering a pirate ship. Fortunately this is overturned by the whale. Shortly afterwards the arrival at Mount Ararat is heralded when two doves are sighted carrying olive twigs. Safe on land Noah celebrates the occasion by holding a party.

Little information is available as to the selection and introduction of vocabulary. There is no point of reference and no vocabulary listing the words used. The only statement made is that 'new words, as they occur, will generally be recognised from the pictures, or be easily guessed at by their context'. Even allowing for the fact that almost all the words and phrases are from the children's world, the vocabulary load found in a text of this length is large by primary school standards.

For a first year reader a relatively wide selection of grammatical forms is included. The story is told within the present, perfect and immediate future tenses. Regular verbs of all three types are used together with at least a dozen irregular ones. The rest of the grammar used is quite simple, with the exception of a few infinitive constructions and one instance of the agreement of the past participle with a preceding direct object (Vous nous avez sauvés). About half a dozen question-types are found. Simple sentences are used exclusively during the first ten pages, after which adjectival clauses appear regularly. There are also a few cases of both noun clauses and adverbial clauses.

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. For two possible uses of "L'Arche de Noé" see DESCRIPTION above. The omission of an end vocabulary is justified on the grounds that the pupils will make their own vocabularies under the teacher's direction. The preface expresses the hope that 'many of the scenes and dialogues will be acted in class'. The exclusive use of the 'vous' form of address is explained on grounds of simplicity.

5. PRESENTATION. The paper is of medium thickness and of good quality. Large print, with features of script handwriting, appears throughout the reader. The entire story is arranged in paragraphs interspersed with occasional songs. The text occupies most of the space of each page, and there is no lack of reading material. Only narrative form of presentation is found. The text, including songs and captions, is all in French. The greater part of it is expressed in conversational French, for which the English method of punctuation is adopted.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. Pictures of various sizes, but mostly small, are to be found on the majority of pages. Apart from one page-size illustration in eight colours inside the front cover, everything is in black and white. The two central pages and two others at the back of the book are occupies by a very large picture. Some of the small pictures, particularly those of animals are at times very rough approximations. The content of illustrations ranges from single objects to complete situations, the latter appearing for the most part in the larger pictures. Both the position on the page and the captions used connect these pictures closely to the text.

7. ACTIVITIES. The following songs are worked into the text at intervals, being sung by one or other of the characters: 'Baa, baa, brebis noire', 'Nous voyageons à Ararat', 'Dors petit bébé', 'Mon nom est Henriette', 'Il nous a sauvés du déluge', 'La chanson des éléphants' and 'Savez-vous planter les choux'. In each case the melody is provided.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. The aim to provide lively reading material has certainly been achieved. This reader is full of incident and conversational French from beginning to end. With children who have the necessary range of language in their basic course it is certain to be successful.

It is doubtful whether children who are 'just beginning French' should, in addition to their basic course, be confronted with so much new matter in French. It is true that the vocabulary belongs to the children's world, but there is a limit to the number of unfamiliar words and grammatical mechanisms that can safely appear in a supplementary reader. When too great a stock of words has to be carried, recall becomes a tedious effort and pronunciation itself often suffers. The illustrations in general serve their purpose, though in the case of some of the smaller ones an animal or object may not be recognised.

In the preface the author has pointed out the possibility of using this reader as a course book with juniors. The difficulty here is that a main course and a reader fulfil different functions. A book which has the requirements of a supplementary reader automatically disqualifies itself as a course-book. A course-book requires regular changes of environment so that a sufficiently varied and useful vocabulary can be introduced. It also needs a carefully planned progression as regards the introduction of grammar. In 'L'Arche de Noé', however, the perfect tense appears on the second page. Similar practices are not unknown in certain introductory audio-visual courses. The makers of such courses, however, have different aims and use different aids. The author of a text-book course or reader must of necessity leave more to the initiative of the individual teacher. And in these circumstances the latter is entitled to a methodical approach to the language.

On the whole this reader provides excellent material for children who have sufficient foundation in French to read comfortably within the language range it uses. Whether it is considered as a reader or a course-book, it does not provide for the needs of 'children beginning French'. It is probable that the attempt to bring this story within the powers of comprehension of first-year juniors is too great an undertaking. In any case it is widely accepted that juniors do not need reading material of any kind at the initial stage of French teaching.

YOUNG, Gale and ROBINSON, Jean G.

Monsieur Charbon

1. COMPONENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS.

Pupils' reader (pp. 48), containing texts, illustrations:

	s.	d.
	4	0
Total cost	4	0

George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 182 High Holborn, London W.C.1.
1962. Soft cover: 5½" x 8½".

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION. This reader is intended for beginners in the first year of the secondary school. The Foreword states that "Monsieur Charbon" is 'a serious text-book, carefully designed for the classroom; either as a complete introduction to French or as a reader to supplement formal grammar instruction'. The story takes place in a modern setting, though not specifically in France; the illustrations follow carefully the background of the text itself.

3. CONTENT. "Monsieur Charbon" is a continuous series of episodes not divided into chapters. Monsieur Charbon is the name of a large dragon - a dragon who derives considerable pleasure from making smoke. Various adventures all end with Charbon being reprimanded for making dense clouds of smoke, spoiling the town and countryside alike. After several thwarted attempts at finding somewhere to settle down and continue happily making smoke Charbon decides that the only answer is to emigrate.

The vocabulary of this reader has been carefully selected to accumulate gradually and progressively. There is no list of words used; this is explained by a note in the Foreword; 'No French English vocabulary will be found at the back of this book. Its place is taken by the copious illustrations, in which almost all new words are explained as they occur, and in reference to their context. Thus they fall simply and naturally into place and are unconsciously assimilated. The frequent repetition both of words and phrases should ensure that they remain embedded in the mind long after learnt-by-heart'. 'Vocabs' have been forgotten. Other words have been chosen for their obvious guessability. The illustrations, in fact, have between 180 and 200 labels attached, referring to words and phrases within the text.

Like the vocabulary of this reader, the grammar is also introduced gradually and progressively, beginning at the initial stages of learning the language. The narrative is confined for the most part to the present tense, but towards the end of the book, the perfect tense has been introduced. The future is expressed using 'aller'; direct, indirect and relative pronouns have been avoided and even in the later stages sentence structure remains simple; subordinate clauses where they do occur are generally straightforward and usually introduced by 'quand'. 'On the assumption that the pupil knows no French, or very little, the book builds up simultaneously vocabulary and grammatical construction, each step resting on knowledge already assimilated.'

4. NOTES FOR TEACHER. None.

5. PRESENTATION. This reader is printed in large clear type on mid-weight paper. Use is made of both narrative and conversation. Layout and punctuation throughout are in the French style. French only is used in the text itself. Frequently illustrations encroach upon the text and often spread over the narrow margins to the edges of the pages themselves. The tunes are given with the songs and these are printed in normal musical notation as a single melodic line.

6. ILLUSTRATIONS. "Monsieur Charbon" is very copiously illustrated with sketch-type black-and-white drawings. A single illustration in colour is used for the frontispiece (with appropriate colour-adjective labels). The pictures are of all sizes and are integrated with the text itself. Their main object is to provide a visual cue for understanding the text, and to this end they portray the characters in the textual situations with plenty of background detail. As mentioned above, labels are added, noting vocabulary and some short phrases.

7. ACTIVITIES. There are seven songs to be found within the text, these are set to well-known tunes and are designed to teach specific points of grammar and vocabulary. Thus on p. 18 we find a song devoted to drilling the present tense of 'AVOIR' and on p. 19 another devoted to the present tense of 'ETRE'.

8. EXERCISES. None.

9. AUDIO AIDS. None.

10. GENERAL COMMENTS. "Monsieur Charbon" is for first-year secondary pupils, and has been published in the form of a short reader. At first sight it would appear that the main intention was to provide amusement. The appearance of a dragon in a real-life setting creates a farcical atmosphere in which the author's sense of humour is well exploited. The book, therefore, has considerable amusement value, though there is some danger that the attempt to provide a sustained humorous element may not always have the desired effect on children.

    The author states that this work is in fact a serious text-book which can be used as a complete introduction to French. There is a rather unspecific claim to a progression into 'grammatical construction'. An attempt is made to render the material assimilable by weaving into the plot repetitions of particular sentence patterns in the same or a slightly changed form, e.g. time expressions are practised when the characters repeatedly make wrong guesses at the correct time.

    The approach as a whole might appear to be effective, but compared with a conventional course possessing a single aim it does not inspire confidence as a means of laying a solid foundation in French. The chief merits of "Monsieur Charbon" are as a reader. The subject matter would probably suit juniors. Given skilful teaching and a fourth year class with a good foundation in French, the language range should not be too great.

    This reader is lavishly illustrated with drawings extending to the extremities of the pages. Much detail is shown. The absence of questions or exercises is surprising in view of the stated aim.